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THE SECRET OF THE QUIET MIND

BY THE
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BY ARCHDEACON WILBERFORCE

THERE IS NO DEATH

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PREFACE

"There is one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in all."—EPH. iv. 6 (R.V.).

UNDER this majestic pronouncement of the Unity of the Absolute, the Universal Fatherhood of the Infinite Originator, the supreme control of the Omnipotent Overruler, the Immanence of the All-inclusive Spirit, and the abiding Presence of God in man, "half gods go, and GOD appears."

The mental limitations that banished God to distant skies, where He is enthroned in royal reserve, vanish before this inspired disclosure of the One Infinite Life, "closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet," and when this transcendent truth has passed from a proposition intellectually accepted into an experience of the sense-consciousness, it becomes the governing power of life, and reveals—

THE SECRET OF THE QUIET MIND.

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"Now, while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, the son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord (Jehovah) saith unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit Thou on My right hand, till I put Thine enemies underneath Thy feet? If David then calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son? And no one was able to answer Him a word."—Matt. xxii. 41 (R. V.).	

ADVENT

“The temple of the Lord is holy, which temple ye are.”—

I COR. iii. 17.

THIS analogy of St. Paul seems to me to express the root thought of Advent, and the appointed Gospel for the first Sunday in Advent stimulates the thought by reminding us that the Lord Jesus went into the Temple of God and cast out them that bought and sold in the Temple, an action suggestive of a great spiritual truth. I am unable to base an Advent exhortation upon the ordinary conceptions of the Advent derived from the Theology of Augustine. I know that amongst the varieties of the religious imagination there are many noble souls, wiser and better than myself, to whom the words of the Advent collect convey a direct prophecy of a physical fact to occur at some unknown time on the material plane. To me, however, the Advents of Jesus are not movements in space and cosmic catastrophes, but modes of manifestation, and

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I cannot consider them on any other plane of thought. The only "coming again" of the Lord Jesus which appears to me to be true is the opening of the spiritual nature, the power of seeing into supersensuous realities, the pressure from without of the Christ Spirit, whereby the universally indwelling Christ nature is sensitised and quickened. This "coming of the Lord" does not bring any person from a distance, or make anything to be that was not there before, any more than a powerful telescope makes a distant star to be; the new spiritual sight does not create the supernatural reality and in all such "openings," whether gradual or sudden, the Lord "cometh with clouds," a metaphor taken from the Book of Daniel, descriptive of the disciplinary element of every great awakening, with the travail pains of a new birth, with the trials, temptations, and purgings that accompany the operation for cataract performed by the Great Physician on the spiritual eye. This interpretation of the Advent, as differentiated from the common and conventional interpretation of a colossal catastrophe followed by a great assize, appears to me to express the distinction between deep spiritual conviction and intellectual assent to Christian dogmatics. Spiritual conviction differs from

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assent to dogma as intuition differs from intellect, as those deep and spiritual assurances which you cannot describe to another differ from your laudable religious convictions based upon the accepted dogmatic theology of the Church. He, to whose intuitions the Lord has come, is strangely at rest in his mind ; he is not perplexed by the endeavour mentally to arrange the relative values in the scheme of salvation of separate Persons in the Trinity, and so on ; he starts from the first dawning of a perception of the grandeur, the oneness, the Allness of the Infinite Love and Reason that has expressed itself in the universe ; he does not work from matter up to spirit, but from spirit down to matter ; he perceives that there is "one body," namely, all that is, and one spirit, namely, the *substantia*, the infinite consciousness, the cause, the vital intensity of all that is, and he finds the interpretation of himself, and also an explanatory concept of the Universal Soul in the Lord Jesus, Whom he recognises as not only the embodiment under a limitation for purposes of manifestation of the nature of the Absolute and therefore wholly Divine, but also the exhibition in perfection of a sonship which is the attribute of humanity as a whole and therefore entirely human. So the spiritual believer needs

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no arguments, or shrewd apologetics, or dogmas of the Council of Nicæa to guarantee the divinity of Jesus Christ, for he sees Him as the unit of the universe, as representative of all that is "body" and so speaking of Himself as Son of Man; and representative of all that is "spirit" and therefore justified in saying I and the Absolute, "I and the Father are one"; and believing that the objective spirit of Jesus is working in every subjective human spirit, slowly subduing all disharmony, and forming those who will love Him, trust Him, call to Him, come to Him, yield to Him into the image of His own perfection, he is a little impatient of these conceptions of "comings and goings," and triumphal processions through space; and while he acknowledges that certain phrases are necessarily used of this embodiment of the Universal Soul as mental accommodations, just as we use phrases of meteorological facts as mental accommodations, speaking of equator and sunrise and sunset, he considers that they do not refer to movements in space, but to modes of manifestation of that Eternal Logos immanent in all men which was exceptionally and perfectly manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ. Am I theologically justified in this line of thought? I contend that I am, because Christian theology

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has two founts—the Greek and the Latin—and it is refreshing to note how clear this teaching is in the writings of the early Greek theologians. Clement of Alexandria, in the *Stromata*, speaks of the Lord Jesus as the Royal Logos, the image of God, and he describes human reason as the image of that image which dwells in man and unites man with God. And both he and Athanasius understood Faith not as the attitude of accepting certain propositions on authority, but as the insight of the soul into eternal realities, as becoming intuitively conscious of the Divine activity within you, which activity continues whether you are conscious of it or not. Justin Martyr, trained in the same school, says: "You are not to think that the Lord Jesus came down from anywhere or went up." Chrysostom, in his celebrated homily against the Arians, says: "These expressions are not to be interpreted in a material sense; they are expressions accommodated to our understandings." Similarly the expressions as to the Lord coming again "from thence," as in the language of the creed (from spirit conditions, from the unseen universe), to judge the world, need not—I would say should not—be interpreted materially as local movements through the world of space.

What then, from this point of view, is the

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appropriate mental exercise for the season of Advent? I would state it thus:—

Granted that Advent means, as F. D. Maurice said, "Not that Christ will assume again the limitations He has left, but that He will be manifested as He is." Granted that it means, as St. Paul says, ἀποκάλυψις, "unveiling," that the hope of the Christian is, in the words of the *Te Deum*, "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge," but understood in the sense that "coming and being our Judge" will be from within and not from without, as Christ is in us, both as our Judge and our hope of glory, and not at some hidden date in the remote future, but daily; then the Advent exercise should be, not a semi-terrified anticipation of a future cosmic catastrophe followed by a great assize, but an intense reverent discovery of, and devotion to, an internal Christ Presence. And we see at once the appropriateness of the episode of the cleansing of the Temple standing in the fore-front of the Advent teaching.

When St. Paul says to me, to you, "The temple of the Lord is holy, which temple ye are," he is suggesting to us a spiritual reality, a theology as old as humanity—the theology of the doctrine of the indwelling Logos, the theology of the Christ, "The Kingdom of Heaven is

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within you." He is drawing back the veil that shrouds the mystery of man's being; he is appealing to a Divine fact in man; he is assuring us that sanctification is not a mosaic of moralities painfully built up by acts of asceticism and renunciation, or conformity to an elaborate system of ethics and ordinances, but a life lived in recognition of "the power that worketh in us," in the sublime spirit of confidence that He who hath begun a good work in us will carry it out; he is aiming at awakening in man a consciousness of his true dignity and worth, reminding us that our bodies are but the walls of the temple, not, of course, to be neglected—indeed, the body resolutely refuses to be neglected—but to be restored and kept in repair by food, water, air, and rest; but that enshrined within is the true Shechinah, the heavenly light, the share of the Creator's life allotted to us which, though often dimmed in its illuminating power by the encroachment of the temple walls, never ceases to plead within against a mere animalised existence unworthy of a son of God.

'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us, "for the temple of the Lord is holy, which temple ye are."

It is a glorious thought. If we could believe it, trust it, act upon it, above all manifest it, all

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lesser conditions of human life would vanish in the tremendous reality of the essential inseverability of God and man.

It would be to us the bed rock of assurance and fortify us against ourselves. We all have our times of darkness, of soul bitterness, when we are crushed by the sense of failure, when God seems silent and the heavens are like brass, when perhaps we, knowing better, have fallen before some unworthy temptation, and we are shedding tears of self-reproach. If we understood our Lord's meaning in the mystery of this earthly life, we should know that His loving spirit is the secret cause of our bitter hatred of ourselves. There has been an Advent. He has come to His temple. He has set up His judgment throne within; our self-condemnation is from Him. He says, "Let not your heart be troubled," My Spirit is set more deeply in you than your own soul, if it were not so this fall would not distress you, your sorrow is a sign to you that I am abiding in you; your lower self with all its unregulated tendencies will have a lingering life and give you trouble, but it is doomed because My Spirit blends with yours; "I in them, and thou in Me;" thou art my Temple; I am cleansing it because I love thee with an everlasting love. What confidence

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it can give us as to the condition of many whom we have loved who have passed over unawakened, as Whittier says, "Christless lifting up blind eyes to the silence of the skies" (he ought not to have said Christless). The only Eternal Almighty Law in the universe is the law of Love, and God is Love. Over all separations, distances, deaths, Love prevails. Death has no power over love, even over our poor human love. Love's resources are infinite. "If I go down into hell, Thou art there," yes there, if I am there, or if any one I love is there, for God is in me and in all, and God is "the Saviour of all men especially of them that believe," but of all, for "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." How calm and confident it keeps the believer amidst social upheavings and political convulsions and international complications. God is immanent in all. His is the Kingdom and the power and the glory. "The Lord sitteth between the Cherubim be the earth never so unquiet."

Now, though reason and conscience assure us that this is true, obviously it is exceedingly difficult to live in conscious realisation of so transcendent a fact. The constant demands and usurpations of our lower nature often hide it from us; there is also the danger of holding

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the truth merely intellectually ; but to live consciously in the recollection of it if it be but for an hour, if it be just while in Church, or at the Blessed Sacrament, stimulates life, strengthens character, revitalises the soul. How powerful a motive it affords for the struggle against sensual appetite, anger, despondency, and the rest of the darker conditions of our flesh education. How it scatters the paltry worries that vex and harass. While the mind is fixed on it, how unutterably base does it make anger, impurity, selfishness, rebellion, and vindictiveness. What it demands is the gradual formation of the habit of self-surrender to the Divine overrule of the indwelling Christ Spirit ; exposure of the inner being to the influence and the sunshine of the all-pervading, all-surrounding Divine Presence ; the rallying cry in despondency, "I am the Lord's" ; "Christ is in me the hope of glory ;" "Able to keep me from falling, by the power that worketh in me."

Two conclusions follow. The first is this. As "carnal mind" is the Temple of the Christ mind, how far am I exercising my measure of volition in keeping that Temple clean so that the Christ mind may have freedom ?

I think we might each one ask searchingly

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the question to-day. Is His Temple clean, the Temple of myself in which He dwells?

Advent, with its reminder of the rapid onward rush of time, cries aloud, "Awake thou that sleepest, and cleanse those Temple courts of thine"; realise the awfulness and blessedness of existence; God has thought thee, He can never unthink thee, thou art His tabernacle; the Lord is not far away on a sapphire throne; He is close at hand; He is in thy Temple; have the courage to call Him into activity. He is power, love, helpfulness, accessibility. Call Him to come to thee, if necessary with His scourge, and willingly suffer Him to drive out all traffickers; these moods, tempers, doubts, indulgencies, appetites, angers, and irritabilities from thy Holy of Holies.

And the second conclusion is this. It is not possible really to hold this truth of the indwelling divine and lead a selfish life. The highest conception of the Lord's Temple is not the individual, but the Race. Humanity is God-souled, and isolated individuality is impossible. Each one of us has a responsibility for the whole, and whether we realise it or not, we are making for the world's happiness or its misery, its nobility or its degradation. It is the test of the higher faith, "by this we know that we have

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passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Without amplifying that thought, I leave it as the unanswerable basis of the many appeals made to us at this season of the year. Think of the many in London who need your help. Think of their little knowledge of, and their little care for, higher things; of their daily struggles, with so few alleviations; think of their narrow and joyless lives. Then think of the duty that is ours; and think of this terrible truth, that a heart without love and liberality is a dead heart, a Christless heart. If your own grasp of spiritual truth is a comfort to you, remember the urgent need of the throbbing life all around you, and remember St. Paul's argument, which we clergy feel justified in repeating to you, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things?"

“MYSTERIES” :

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

“Great is the mystery, God was manifest in the flesh.”
—1 TIM. iii. 16.

“The mystery hid from the ages ; Christ in you, the hope of glory.”—COL. i. 26.

ST. Paul is fond of using that word “mystery.” In writing to the Corinthians, he asks them to estimate him as a “steward of mysteries,” the mysteries of God.

Whence came that expression “mystery” into the vocabulary of St. Paul? Is he not reaffirming the ancient tradition that in every religion there is a simple and rudimentary aspect on the one hand, and a profound and esoteric aspect on the other, and that we are meant to pass on, as our spiritual insight increases, from the one to the other? St. Paul uses the word “mystery” no less than eighteen times in his letters. No other author of an Epistle in the New Testament uses the word

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at all. St. Paul's mind was evidently saturated with the traditions of the most famous of the ancient pre-Christian mysteries, the Eleusinian. The predominant idea of the Eleusinian mysteries was that initiation into the secrets became a sacrament of the Absolute, and established a kinship between the soul of man and the Divine nature. Great men of the past were profound believers in the elevating power of the Eleusinian mysteries. Pindar, Sophocles, Isocrates, Plutarch, Plato, all spoke of the Eleusinian mysteries with deep respect. These mysteries represented the attempt of the Hellenic genius to assimilate the spirit of Oriental metaphysic, and the highest, purest representatives of the Eleusinian mysteries were elevated, by intense thought-concentration, into a spirit of complete self-abandonment to the Divine nature. St. Paul, when he speaks of himself as a "steward of mysteries," suggests that there is also in the Christian revelation, which came not to destroy but to interpret earlier revelations, a profound sphere, a mystic teaching, a wider knowledge than the superficial, and a completer experience than the conventional, a new apprehension of the life of God in man, capable, when apprehended by the initiate, of obliterating every illusion of fear, sin, pain, weakness, with the splendid assurance of the

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essential inseverability of God and man. Now the two most prominent of these “mysteries,” of which St. Paul was a steward and into which we Christians of the present day ought to be initiated, are specially appropriate for our thoughtful consideration at the season when, in common with the whole civilised world, we are observing the festival of Christmas. The first is indicated when, in writing to Timothy, he says, “Great is the mystery, God manifest in the flesh.” The other is indicated when, in writing to the Colossians, he says, “The mystery hid from the ages; Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Christmas is the record of the fulfilment of the first of these great “mysteries of God.” “Great is the mystery—God was manifest in the flesh.” And the question seems to me to be, from which standpoint have we celebrated the Christmas festival? from the standpoint of the initiate, whose intuitions have assimilated the “mystery,” or from the standpoint of the well-meaning surface observer, whose thoughts are bound under the limitations of time, incident, and historical happenings? There is much to be said for the conventional, the historic observance of Christmas. The modern world is wisely given to the exaltation of its heroes and the observance of the centenaries of the great men

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of the past, as witness the present stir about Milton, a prince of poets and a master of imperfect theology. The memory of a hero ennobles the race, and there are facts in the world in connection with the birth of the Christ that materialism cannot stamp out. From the conventional earth-plane alone it is appropriate that the Churches should ring at Christmas time with the *Te Deum laudamus* of a humanity, still imperfect, but ever the brighter and the better because a hero has lived, to Whose cradle can be traced every step in the moral, social, and intellectual progress of the race. Greatness, from the human point of view, can surely rise no higher than to the level of the pure and sinless One, Who lifted the world's ideals, soothed the world's suffering, and brightened the world's life, and Who first saw the light, through human eyes of flesh and blood, in the stable of the inn at Bethlehem, two thousand years ago.

But this historic plane of thought does not necessarily unveil the unseen world to the soul of man. It is not sufficient for the spiritual insight of those who are initiated into the mysteries of God. "God was manifest in the flesh;" that is the mystery of Christmas—God. Our age has emancipated itself from the un-

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speakable dilemma of the Atheist, who would deny to the universe an Originating Mind. We believe in God. It is the boast and glory of this age of investigation to unfold deeper conceptions of God. The thoughts of men are widening as to their apprehension of the Infinite. Microscope, telescope, chemical research, scientific analysis, all prove the necessary existence of the unity of the Creative Mind; but the tendency of this line of thought is to sublimate God away into the “everywhere,” and while acknowledging Him as the greatest inference of the Universe, a vague omnipresence, a final almightiness, to lose Him in individuality, in nearness, in reality. The sweet, soul-comforting history of Bethlehem repeats its annual anthem, “Peace on earth,” and reveals God, all of God that we can helpfully know, to the hearts and consciences of man. Omnipotence becomes finited, God becomes dependent, God rests on the bosom of a gentle maiden, “that Mother blest, to whom, caressing and caressed, clings the Eternal Child,” and the “mystery” is the perfect and complete self-revelation of the moral life of the Absolute in this one member of the human family as in no other.

The initiate, therefore, without neglecting the mundane aspect of Christmas, with its unique

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opportunities for family greetings, for kindly intercourse, for social courtesies, will mainly occupy his mind during the festival with three fundamental thoughts. (1) The knowableness of God. "You cannot know God," says the Agnostic. "God is boundless, and the human mind cannot know boundlessness." "You can know God," answers the mystery of Bethlehem's cradle, for the Supreme Spirit has embodied Himself. He was manifested that we may know Him. What does He mean when He says, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father?" He means more than tongue of man can utter ; by considering one phase we do not exhaust the interpretation ; but it means this, that I may know the entire character, and mind, and moral attitude of the Creative Intensity called God towards men, from the sample life and character of Jesus of Nazareth. For "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." It is fair to ask, How, then, can the part manifest the whole? Even so. It is a geometrical law as well as a theological proposition. Imagine, if you can, a perfect circle with its circumference sweeping through world-filled space. No mind can measure its vastness or track its imaginary curve. Give a segment of that circle to a geometrician. Give it him

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accurately, and you have given him the whole circle; by unalterable, irrefutable law he will work out for you in figures the exact sweep of the whole circle. In that segment that you have given him dwelleth the whole fulness of the circle bodily, in a manifestation.

The Child of Mary is the revealed segment of the infinite circle of the Omnipresent, Immanent Soul of the Universe, and knowing Him I know God.

(2) Then the second thought is this. Christmas is the witness of the sympathy of God. Does God care when we grieve? How do we know? We are weak, troubled, imperfect, blind. We cannot gaze into the limitless splendour of such a conception as that of the Infinite Originator—and we need not. Christmas says, “Withdraw your thoughts from this attempt to measure boundlessness; look off unto Jesus.” Christmas is the sacrament of the sympathy of the Infinite. The infant cries from the Holy Manger are the tears in the eyes of God because we suffer. God does care. He cares when a sparrow falls to the ground; He cares when a child cries over a broken toy. The declaration that He has manifested Himself in flesh in the conditions of this world, so full of sorrows and

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agonies, where hearts are strained well-nigh to breaking,

“Where fondest hopes are oftenest crossed
And fondest hearts are severed most,”

is His guarantee to us that every human sorrow calls forth the compassion of God.

True, “we see not yet all things put under man,” but, the Apostle continues, “We see Jesus.” He has not yet crushed evil and sorrow and pain out of this world—they have not yet done their educative work—but He has come to explain to us the necessity for this dark shadow, and to endure it with us, and bend His own neck to the yoke. Why, then, should we not draw near to Him? Sad hearts and weary ones, that helpless infant in the cradle is God’s oath to us that He sympathises with us. Jesus, the Manifestor, has never left the world into which He came. It is no past Christ, or Infant Christ, or limited Christ Who is our light and salvation now. Immanuel is the risen living embodiment of the “Jesus-Christness” of God, transforming us, renewing us, purifying us, now, at this moment present in our midst, ready, whenever we desire it, to feed us at the Altar, sacramentally, with His very life.

“MYSTERIES”

(3) Thirdly, Christmas is the declaration of peace between man and God, and the prophecy of ultimate peace between man and man; and if you would spend this Christmas-tide in His spirit, lay yourself out to manifest your Lord by gentleness and self-forgetting kindness. Make others happy, by reflecting love, by self-suppression, by generosity, by liberal gifts, by cheerfulness; bring peace to some one heart, if you can, for Christ's sake. Thus, as initiates into the mystery, we shall know the meaning of “Immanuel, God with us.” “God manifest in the flesh,” and, though the environment of our own life be sorrowful and a shadow seem to be over its future, though the empty chair remind us of “the vanished hand and the voice that is still,” though our tears flow at the thought of some loved one far away, we shall still know a blessed Christmas, if it is not, in the conventional sense, a happy one.

The second of the twin “mysteries,” the Christmas mysteries, the mysteries of which Paul was steward, following from the first, is one which I am ever striving to realise more keenly myself, and, imperfectly, to urge upon others, “the mystery hid from the ages, Christ in you.”

Why does he say, “hid from the ages”? Was

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it hid? In a sense it was hid, for it was never objectively manifested. The doctrine of the Logos, the immanence of the creative self-utterance of the Originator, the clothing of the Eternal Reason in matter, the doctrine connecting the first cause with the phenomena of the Universe, the thought which is now, to the initiate, the life blood of Christianity, was never wholly "hid" from the reverent thinkers of any age. No historical study is more fascinating than to trace out the doctrine of the Logos, the self-utterance of the Absolute, through the old religions of the world; but the conception was necessarily vague, impersonal, indefinite. The conception of the Eternal idea passing into reality, or universal thought transmuting itself into matter, became too Pantheistic. I am aware that it inspired the beautiful thoughts of the Eleatics, but the individuality of the Universal Soul was lost by being mentally identified with the matter in which He was expressed, so the transcendent power of the teaching was "hid" till revealed, explained, manifested in Bethlehem's cradle.

In the fulness of time this Eternal Logos, which had always been the central life of every man born into the world, and without Whom was not anything made that was made, sought

“ MYSTERIES ”

separate human enclosure in one spotless, perfect human life, the life of Jesus of Nazareth, and so gave form, outline, consistency, to the age-long doctrine of the Logos. The author of the Fourth Gospel adopts the actual philosophical terminology of the ancient thinkers, and says, “The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory full of grace and truth.”

Obviously this manifestation does not reveal the profound secret how God and matter blend, how spirit and flesh ensphere the one the other, but it emblazons throughout the whole Creation, the patent fact that so it was in one glorious member of the race, the anniversary of Whose birth we commemorate at Christmas, and that “as He is so are we in this world.”

This revealed mystery fully justifies emphasis being laid upon the necessity for finding this Christ nature in us, and thinking from the Christ mind instead of from carnal mind, and it suggests the appropriate spiritual contemplation for Christmas. This Jesus, thus humbly born, is to be considered objectively and subjectively. Objectively He is a Theophany, an individualisation of the infinite self-consciousness of God. He is the Absolute made accessible under a limitation. He is “God

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manifest in flesh"; in that respect He is the Divine Love moving amongst us, a mystery of wisdom, power, and tenderness, and His appeal is "Come to Me, ye weary, I have come forth from the Infinite to seek and to save you." But He is also to be considered subjectively. He is the interpretation of every noble instinct, every tender thought, that ever stirred in the human soul. He says to every one, "Remember you also are potential Christs. The Logos which is in Me in perfection is in you in germ; it is My life, My spirit that is in you. It is My nature that is struggling with your temptations, lifting you to higher ideals." When you know it, really know it, as Paul knew it, you will be able to say as he said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Consider for a moment: Is there anything really practical in this "mystery of God" now made manifest? Or is it all just words, words? It is intensely practical if it is believed, not held merely intellectually, if it is gripped, appropriated by a strong mental act of repeated affirmation. Indeed, there are darknesses in human lives for which it is the only remedy. I know a few who, like Paul, are able to use it. When the soul is wrung with sorrow, when the body is crushed by pain, they are able to

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affirm with intense meaning, “I have within me, deeper than all else, an intense life which nothing can touch. The Christ life, the life so perfectly manifested in Jesus, is in me. It is Jesus; He abides in me. His 'precious life is my true self; the present environment that oppresses me is temporary, illusory;” and then there comes a strange mastery over external things, and over the poor, infirm, suffering mortal self. When the cry goes up, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death,” the answer comes at once, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” That is our Father’s revelation to us in Christ Jesus, that is the inwardness of Bethlehem’s cradle; it ought to clear our mental sky, it ought to help us in our struggle against the lower self, it ought to assure us of the temporary nature of this brief school-time of illusion, and fill us with joy and peace in believing.

Is there any peril, think you, in this transcendent truth? any risk in being an “initiate” into this “mystery of Christ in us the hope of glory?” There is; certainly there is. This share of the Christ that dwells within must, if we continuously disobey its promptings, become our enemy, because it is so inexorably our friend. If we know that the Christ nature is in us, we cannot hide ourselves in our Lord’s

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petition, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." If we are initiates, we do know.

No life can lie so close to the life of the everlasting as our God-inhabited lives do lie without "Christ in us" being our perpetual help or our perpetual condemnation, our joy or our terror. That is the true meaning of the Christ coming in Judgment. The great white Throne is not some incident in the dim future; it is now within us. We are predestined to be conformed to the image of the objective Jesus. The subjective, indwelling Jesus-nature is doing that work within us, evolving that conformity, making us new men and new women. We cannot finally frustrate it, but we can hinder it for a time, quench it for a while; but continuously to oppose to it our human freedom of choice and our lower tendency is to court the discipline of "salvation yet so as by fire," the consuming fire of burning love. What, then, should be our prayer? It should be, "Father, reveal Thy Son in me; reveal sonship in me." That was St. Paul's definition of his own conversion; he said, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me." He had endless troubles on the surface plane of his life after that revelation, but no despondency. "I live," he said, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

“MYSTERIES”

Then, let us ask one more question. Is there any practical usefulness to others in this revealed mystery of the indwelling Christ? There is; and that surely is the underlying meaning of the angels' anthem, "Peace on earth, to men of good will," because no one can hold even a slight glimmer of this truth without loving and honouring the brethren. The spiritual insight which deepens your consciousness of union with the Absolute creates a deeper sense of union with humanity. First, the knowledge will widen your theology; it will clear your mind of the last shreds of the old God-dishonouring conception of everlasting damnation for any of God's erring children, because it would make it absolutely impossible for you to rest in the beatific vision if any of your God-inhabited brethren were in an endless hell; you would break down Heaven's door to get to them.

Secondly, it will stimulate you to leave the too common attitude of luxurious isolation, and assure you that no man, certainly no initiate into the mysteries of God, liveth unto himself. You will remember that the Man of Nazareth, into Whom the God-inhabited Babe of Bethlehem grew, and to Whose image we are being conformed, was an enthusiast for humanity, a passionate lover of the people, a

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friend of the poor, a comforter of the weary and heavy-laden, and though He was early done to death by the Ecclesiastics and Aristocrats of His day, He sowed the seeds of principles of social evolution which can never perish, which are slowly illuminating humanity, and which must be most actively operative in those who are sufficiently initiated into the "mysteries" to know that, deep within them, they "have the mind of Christ."

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RELIGION AND WAR

“Add to your faith virtue.”—2 PET. i. 5.

WORDS of command, whether spoken by an Apostle or a drill-sergeant, must be made to bear the weight of their full interpretation ; and this injunction, thus interpreted, implies an authoritative justification for a citizen soldiery as a national reserve force, and a command to professors of religion to be proficient in the art of defensive warfare. To some this intimate connection between religion and war will appear a paradox ; to the “peace at any price party” it will appear a blasphemy, but it is incontrovertible. “Add to your faith virtue,” says the Apostle ; and what is faith ? Faith is not believing ; believing is its exercise. Sight is not seeing ; seeing is its exercise. Faith, according to the definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is the inmost Divine substance in man, the measure of the Divine life that is in every man

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as his birthright; it is the share of that Divine sonship which is the attribute and glory of humanity as a whole; when it is awakened into activity, "born from above," its outcome is believing, trusting, growing Godwards. So faith is "that we have likest God within the soul," and its existence is naturally assumed of any community gathered within these walls.

To this Divine part of us we are commanded to add virtue. And what is virtue? The Greek word here translated virtue is *aretè*, a purely military word from Ares, the God of war. In Homer, the word is always used of valour, prowess in the battlefield. Sophocles, in the *Ajax*, uses it for the warlike spirit. The Greek word *aristos*, derived from *aretè*, bears as its first meaning the same interpretation as the Latin word *virtus*—namely, "manliness," "bravery in war." The conventional surface interpretation of virtue meaning morality is not the first, but the second meaning of the word. Thus, literally translated, the injunction that I have quoted from God's immortal literature is an ideal text for a church parade, and I contend that it provides an emphatic contradiction to the shallow falsehood that the service of God and the armed defence of hearth and home are irreconcilable, that the human heart beating

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beneath the uniform of the Sovereign cannot be at the same time loyal to the King of kings. Now, I make a special claim upon your thinking capacity while I briefly elaborate this proposition. Though it is not the spirit of militarism, but the spirit of patriotic duty that we advocate when we urge that the only ultimate safeguard of the nation is universal compulsory military service, when we venture upon this statement we are confronted by earnest and godly people with the assertion that we cannot train the population to be experts in killing their fellow-men, and still profess discipleship to Him who taught the unity of humanity and the inseverability of God and man. I acknowledge the apparent paradox, and I contend that it arises from the difficulty of emancipating our minds from the rudimentary conventional conception of the Supreme Being, and the unreadiness of the human heart to rest in the profounder, more universal conception of God as the Omnipotent Spirit of evolution, "above all, in all, and through all," slowly advancing to ultimate perfection a universe in which He has expressed Himself for an inextinguishable and glorious purpose. Why is this conception of God, as the vitally Real Presence everywhere, unrecognised? Because the teaching of the Christ has been from the first overlaid

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with the Hebrew conception which nationalised God, and with the non-Hebrew Deism which externalised and localised God on a throne in a distant heaven outside His universe. The creed of the Christ, as I understand it, was that "God is Spirit"; not even "a spirit," as it is wrongly rendered, but Spirit—the eternal, self-existing essence whose name, and the law of whose being, is Love; that creation is this love expressing itself in all forms of creaturely activity, the highest of which is humanity; that God is not, therefore, "a person," as we understand the word, but an all-diffused Individuality, self-conscious in all things, and all men. That though not "a person," inasmuch as He is the life-propagator, He may be estimated and addressed by us as "Father"; that we may say to Him, "Our Father, which art in heaven," "Our Infinite Universal Parent Spirit, Thou art everywhere, the pulsation of Thy life through all things causes all to live and move and have their being;" and if the mental demand for personality in the Parent-Soul becomes at any time paramount, it can be fully satisfied by adoration of the one unique Personality in Whom the fulness of the moral character of the Universal Soul was embodied; for Jesus is the Sacrament of the Absolute, the outward and

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visible sign of the inward and spiritual individuality of the all-diffused Being whom we call God ; therefore, without disloyalty to the Universal Soul, we may adore Jesus as Divine. This is what I understand by the Christian revelation, of God, and, to my own mind, this conception of God as the Omnipotent Spirit of Evolution, slowly advancing mankind to a more and ever more perfect condition, relieves the sense of paradox, and minimises the feeling of surprise at the presence and power of what we call moral and physical evil in the world. The relief comes in this way. Even God can only make things by means of the process by which they become what they are. Evolution is a gradual process, and the law of its working is progressive victory over contradiction ; goodness would have no significance in the conscious life of man without its contrast by which to recognise it. Therefore, the unrest and the disorder and the suffering and the imperfection in the world are not due to bad ruling from outside, but to the nature and the conditions of the slow but ultimately irresistible process of evolution from within ; they arise from immaturity, leading to perverted and defective volition ; from humanity's present stage of only partial development ; from man's incapacity as

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yet to realise the truth unfolded by the Christ which we see as the perfect ideal—namely, in man's absolute oneness with God. Meanwhile, the Divine evolution slowly but irresistibly progresses, and one of its products is civilisation, in the sense of justice, equity, and equal rights; and in this plane of its work it meets its oppositions and pushes through them; it comes from time to time in sharp collision with grasping tyrannies and corrupt social conditions and unbounded ambitions, like those of Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century; and times and circumstances must arise in the process of race-development when war is inevitable, and hideous death struggles are the result, and the heroes who, with no personal bitterness, take the lives of others, and lay down their own lives, are, in the profound inwardness of things, unconscious instruments of this self-evolving *anima mundi*, who is "above all, and through all, and in all," and Whom we address as "Our Father, which art in heaven"; but whilst hating, deprecating, opposing evil in all its developments, if we are evolutionists rather than creationists, we may be absolutely certain of the temporary, provisional, relative, evanescent character of that resisting agency of evolution that we call evil; we may

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rest in the assurance that pain, sorrow, struggle, war, are, in our immature state, the inevitable travail pains of the birth of a nobler life for the race, the sicknesses of humanity's childhood, the excreta of the growing human race, existing not in spite of, but as an ingredient of the emergence of the true life of humanity, which, when realised and experienced, will enable us to say with St. Paul, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." I am, therefore, quite consistently able to recognise that, though the terrible incidents of war are part of the crash of the machinery of a world still in the making, and far from the ideal of the finished product, they are in the current of the evolving purpose of Almighty God. This is the explanation for which I requested the co-operation of your thinking capacity; and I now ask this splendid body of men before me to accept this injunction of St. Peter, "Add to your faith virtue," as indicating: First, the source of your power—"Faith"—active faith in God, not as some transcendentalised despot on a throne beyond the stars, but as the self-evolving individual creative Spirit of Love, Who has revealed His nature and His character in one supernaturally perfect

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and divine man, the man Christ Jesus, Who is the manifestor of God, and the interpreter of man to Himself. "God is Spirit," man is spirit, God and man are, therefore, essentially inseverable, and he whose faith is living will commit every activity of his life to the Mighty Friend and Father of the race in Whom "we live and move and have our being." Secondly, there is indicated in St. Peter's injunction the sphere of your responsibility. It is to add to this faith painstaking proficiency in your military duties. "It is to a Citizen Army," said Lord Roberts, "that we must look in the future for the formation of a great reserve." Never was the nation more in need of a citizen soldiery thoroughly trained in the art of war; men of God and yet men of battle; men of the stamp of the Citizen Militia who saved Canada for the Empire at Queenstown Heights in 1812. In the present condition of Europe, whatever may be the convictions of the so-called "Blue Water School," the nation is dreaming in a fool's paradise if it fails to sustain its citizen soldiery at the highest possible standard as to numbers, efficiency, and organisation; at any moment the destiny of England might be in your hands, and you, whom Von Moltke once described as "England's living fortress," would

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be our last and, I believe, our impregnable line of defence. Therefore I exhort you to "add to your faith military proficiency." Finally, I ask you to remember that the interpretation I have emphasised from the literal translation of the words of St. Peter does not obliterate the simple and more obvious meaning of the words, "add to your faith virtue." The strength of every nation, after all, depends upon the purity, the virtue, the right-mindedness of the individuals from whom it is constituted. "Add to your faith virtue." Live purely, nobly, uprightly; consecrate the enterprise of your manhood to Him "Whose you are and Whom you serve," and He will elevate the whole aim of your life, and fill you with that sublime spirit of confidence, determination, and chivalry which was the secret of that great battle hymn of the American Union, to the sound of which thousands of brave men marched to victory and to death:

"In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men
free,
While God is marching on."

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“I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink.”—MATT. xxv. 42.

TWO subjects claim the attention of a preacher to-day, the one is the parable of Dives and Lazarus, which occurs in the Gospel, the other is the annual appeal of Hospital Sunday.

The significance and power of that far-reaching declaration of the Immanence of the Logos, the Mystic Christ in humanity, and the identification of the Lord Jesus with the Logos, the Mystic Christ, implied in the words, “I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink,” are strangely applicable to both these subjects; and first to that pitiful, rejected appeal recorded in this morning’s Gospel,¹ “Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue.” The prominent thought of the parable, if it is a parable, of Dives and Lazarus is that the test point of character turns not upon orthodoxy or breaches of the moral

¹ The first Sunday after Trinity.

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law, but upon man's duty to his fellow-man; that selfishness, exaggerated individualism in this life, is so detrimental to character as to necessitate educative purification in the coming life, and that it is possible to manifest selfishness, gross selfishness, in another sphere of being, when the opportunity of manifesting it has been wanting in the circumstances of this life.

Lazarus at the gate of Dives is the analogy of the constant claim that our fellow-men have upon our sympathy, our time, our energy, our helpfulness. Dives at the mercy of a mean, pitiless, disembodied Lazarus, who contemptuously refuses his pathetic request for water, is an illustration of the fact that poverty in itself is no qualification for the Kingdom of God, and that some souls who have passed over, apparently in the odour of sanctity, but without having discovered their real character, must undergo another death, the death of the lower self, before they attain to the beginning of the Life Everlasting.

To-day, in the altar Scriptures, we are once more confronted with the apparent paradox of the declaration in the Epistle "God is love," and the elaborate picture-lesson of after-death education, contained in the Gospel, in the words, "in Hades he lifted up his eyes being in

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torment." I consider that this story ought never to be passed by in silence, because of the monstrous conclusions that have been drawn from it. It is necessary to emphasise that this instructive parable cannot be used as an argument to justify the God-dishonouring conception of the unending torments of the lost. Without remedial and restoring agency in the world beyond the grave, human life for countless thousands would be but a ghastly mockery. The unceasing wail of a sin-blighted humanity, created with God's absolute foreknowledge, under the doom of a hopeless damnation, would dethrone God, deny the essential inseparability of the human and the divine, predicate a victorious devil, necessitate the eternity of evil, and make the heaven of the saved a mere concentration of unutterable selfishness. Whatever else the parable teaches, it does not teach everlasting punishment. As Ambrose says, "Dives the sinner is pressed with penal agonies that he may escape the sooner." That flame is not endless hopeless retribution, but love inexorable, in painful remedial action, consuming the tares and chaff of a wrongly-formed character. There is distinct evidence that this process is at work, developing within Dives the opposite grace to the sin that had wrecked his life. On earth

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he was a self-centred, respectable, wealthy individualist; in Hades he is caring for others, and solicitude for the brethren is a light-ray from the indwelling God. The discipline of Hades is kindling the dormant sympathy of his heart, and no man whose mind is rightly balanced will believe that the responsible All-Father, by His remedial chastening, will thus produce amendment in a character only to crush it out in hopeless endless pain. To be punished with "Æonian destruction from the presence of the Lord" is not to be essentially severed from God, which is metaphysically impossible, but it is not to know His nearness, to wander under the penalty of an imagined solitude; but, "If I go down into hell, Thou art there." God is there in love, unchanging, tireless, patient, greater than the ages and the wills of men, for God is love, and "at last, far off at last," the awaking soul shall arise and come to its Father.

What are we men and women, of like passions with Dives, to learn to-day in the torrent of our twentieth century life, from the picture drawn by our Lord's own hand?

It is clear that the parable cannot be interpreted merely on the surface. The conclusions on that plane would be curiously

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non-moral. It is inconceivable that Dives should go to hell because he was rich, and that Lazarus should go to heaven because he was poor, yet nothing is said of either of them, except that the one was rich and the other poor. Surely the picture is intended to stimulate thought, and to clear the mind from illusions, and to teach the supreme lesson of the continuity of character after physical death, and that our Father has various schools for character beyond this life. The first illusion from which the Jewish mind might have been cleared by the picture was the illusion of salvation by ancestral privilege. "We have Abraham to our Father" was the nation's boast. The curtain is lifted that they may see how little ancestral privilege will do for them in the coming age. Abraham acknowledges the sufferer's kinship, he calls him son, but he will not offer him the slightest mitigation of his remedial discipline, and the moral is that external respectability, membership with a church in clear and direct covenant with God, will not stand the human soul in stead of character, in the searching light of our Father's judgment.

Another illusion which is swept away is the illusion which pervades crude, unthinking Socialism, namely, that selfishness is the peculiar

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vice of the rich. If you really think into this picture-lesson you will probably come to the conclusion that your heaviest judgment falls upon Lazarus, not upon Dives, and that he and his like are taught that egotism, and worldliness, and indifference to the needs of others are not the monopoly of the well-to-do. This lesson, the lesson "know thyself," had to be taught to Lazarus in the other world. It is not unnatural that the modern Lazarus, lying at the gate, disfigured by the traces of hereditary pauperism, wrecked by his environment, overwhelmed by the degrading State-supported drink temptation, sweated for famine wages, judging only from the surface experience of life, unable to think into the succession of sequences which precede any existing condition, it is not unnatural that he should envy and condemn the rich even while dependent on their bounty.

It is not unnatural that, while he points with scorn to the scandals in the lives of the aristocracy, Lazarus should forget that human selfishness is only a question of degree, and that on his plane of life, selfishness is as rife as amongst the wealthy. The pauper youth who marries within half a crown of starvation, the labourer who drinks half his wages while his

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children need food, the loafer who will not do a real day's work, is as selfish, as truly a voluptuary, in his sphere of being, as any self-indulgent millionaire. Doubtless Lazarus thought, perhaps honestly thought, when he saw Dives pass by in his purple and fine linen, "If only the conditions of our several lives were reversed, it is not crumbs or broken meats I would give to a suffering brother, nor would I leave him to be ministered to by dogs. I would share my wealth with him." How little Lazarus knows himself! He has to learn his heart in a new experience in the unseen world. The conditions are reversed, and how does he act? Dives is deprived of all his possessions and is more grievously afflicted than ever Lazarus has been, while Lazarus is in greater ease and security than Dives ever possessed. In the former life Lazarus was at least somewhat the better for the wealth of Dives, and now Dives appeals to him in direst agony for only a drop of water, and his piteous cry is answered not only by refusal but by a mocking taunt. True, the taunt and the refusal are made by another, but Lazarus acquiesces in it. If love and pity ruled in his heart, if the true principle of Socialism, which is not "What can I take from

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another?" but, "What can I give him?" was there, he would tear himself from the bosom of Father Abraham to help a suffering brother. I know there is mention of a gulf, and gulf indeed there was, the deepest gulf that ever separated man from man, the gulf of want of love and pity. Nothing would persuade me that Abraham and Lazarus are intended to represent purified saints of God. That cannot be heaven where the inhabitants can witness the direst suffering without the eager desire to mitigate it. This earth is better than that; the pre-Christian morality of the Upanishads is infinitely better than that: Yodistera, in the story in the Upanishads, turns his back on heaven that he may seek his beloved in hell; the pagan Duke of Friesland refuses to be baptized by the missionary Willibrod because the missionary told him that his beloved, unbaptized, were in hell; Dives is in a better state than that, for he can think with compassion of, and pray for, his brothers on earth. If Abraham's bosom in this history is intended to allegorise heaven, I can only say, "From such a heaven, good Lord, deliver us, even though the alternative be the Hades of Dives." On the basis of the revealed truth of the Immanence of God, as the Logos, the mystic

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Christ, in humanity, this picture of unutterable selfishness in the unseen world is an illustration of the process of self-knowledge that must precede what is called the second death, when the judgment will be spoken, "I was thirsty," I, Immanent in Dives, I, the universally distributed Divine Nature which is the attribute of humanity as a whole, "I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink." Inasmuch as ye did it not to that pleading soul in Hades, ye did it not unto Me.

The moral that I would apply is this. Selfishness is the most clinging parasite of the human soul, and if it be not purged out of us in this earth-life we are pledging ourselves to the processes of the second death. Selfishness is the cauterisation of the living germ of our ideal humanity. And the one radical cure for selfishness is a clearer and more intelligent recognition of the certain truth of the Immanence of God in humanity. Humanity is the Incarnation. Humanity is the genuine Christ-form of God. The Lord Jesus Christ was the embodied Archetype of humanity, the perfect, God-inhabited specimen of the human race, the highest thought of the Absolute. God is Love. And God is Immanent in all men, and, as John says, "As He is, so are we

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in this world." For man not to love his fellow-man and minister self-sacrificingly to his needs is to deny and silence the God within.

It is perfectly obvious that to see even the fringe of this truth of the Immanence of the universal Christ in humanity unspeakably emphasises our obligation to share by sympathy, and mitigate by liberal gifts, the pitiful sufferings of the brethren of the race. This glorious truth of the Immanence of God, this perfect identification of the Christ with the human race in His words, "I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink," if its result is only an indolent quietistic personal satisfaction, if it is merely an interesting philosophic deduction, may prove a lamentable self-deception. The one solid proof of really believing in the Immanence of God is action, and the mode of action is Godlikeness, or Godliness, or similarity of feeling with God. Godliness is not religiosity, or smug Pharisaism; it is optimism gone to work; it is God-knowledge shining out; it is submission conditioning itself in achievement; it is "Rest in the Lord" reaching forth into helpfulness to man. The only true test of resting in the Lord is that they who thus rest are slowly transformed into the image of Him

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in Whom they rest. Complacent assent to philosophic theories of the universal Mind is not Godliness. A dream, a theory, a dogma, a philosophy can never save the soul alive. The Father of the spirits of men is no doting dispenser of caresses, interposing to prevent the natural consequences of selfish, unprogressive, unhelpful lives. Any theory of the relation between God and man that does not include Godlikeness, which represents what it calls Salvation as rescue from well-deserved punishment, is an appeal to calculating self-love. God's salvation is no such immoral mockery; it is a vital force, slowly transforming character, or it is a delusion. It is an evolving impulse changing hearts, checking propensities, forming Godliness, or it is the baseless fabric of a dream.

The true test of the growth of the Godlike character is, without doubt, its progress along the whole line of human life, the whole range of human experience; it fertilises the whole field of a man's being; where it is growing it slowly makes manhood manlier, home happier, business cleaner, tempers sweeter, desires more regulated; it cannot be hid, it shines out and blesses others. Sometimes, however, a separate and special test is applied to it; some well-

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recognised organisation for the alleviation of pain, sickness, disease, for example, makes a special and direct appeal for pecuniary aid, and the progress and extent of the growth of Godlikeness can be almost measured by the readiness with which that appeal is responded to.

It is necessary to emphasise that the appeal of Hospital Sunday is an appeal to the Godlikeness of those who profess to believe in the Immanence of God, and in a very peculiar and emphatic sense; for the appeal is made now in the full light of the new revelation of the nature and character of God given to the world in the Divine Man, Who came forth from the bosom of the Absolute that He might make Him known, and illustrate in His own person the inseverability of God and man. We know now that the characteristic of Godlikeness is the exact contradiction of the attitude of Abraham and Lazarus, for it is self-sacrificing eagerness to mitigate the anguish of man; the urgency, the obligation, the motive for soothing the pitiful sufferings of men is, therefore, unspeakably emphasised by the revelation of the Incarnation.

It is an entire mistake to assume that care for the sick, and surgical aid to the suffering,

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and the institution of hospitals were unknown in the world before the Incarnation; for the honour of the race it is not so; the human race is the son of God, and the divine sonship has ever stirred sufficiently within man to issue in some form of care for the suffering. The very earliest traces of man, ten thousand, and perhaps twice ten thousand years ago, for no man can date the Archæological ages, provide proofs of skill in surgery, and of human kindness and remedial sympathy. The two ages of man in the dim far distant past called the Palæolithic and the Neolithic have left their fossil records that the sick were tended, and the wounded in battle cared for, with no little skill. Fossil human bones have been discovered that have been carefully set after fracture, fossil human skulls upon which the difficult operation of trepanning has been performed with no other instrument than a sharpened flint.

Similarly in the records of Egypt, and of Ancient India, there are allusions to institutions that foreshadow the hospitals of modern times. There is an inscription on a rock near the city of Surat in India recording how Asoka, the great Buddhist king who reigned in Gujerat in 300 B.C., commanded the establish-

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ment of hospitals in all his dominions, and placed one at each of the four gates of the royal city of Patna; and six hundred years afterwards, in the year 399 A.D., a traveller records that the hospitals of Asoka still existed and flourished. The floods of Mahommedan conquest swept them away, and, at the beginning of this century, only a hospital for animals remained of all the foundations of Asoka.

The modern hospital supported by voluntary contributions is practically the creation of Henry VIII. after his abolition of the convents and monasteries where the sick and the suffering had been cared for.

Thus, according to their lights, did men of the long past ages seek such similarity as was possible to such conception of God as they possessed, and this dim instinct of the Divine, Immanent in man, issuing in care for the welfare of fellow-man, shames us utterly if, in the full light of the Incarnation, we do not self-sacrificingly minister to the suffering and the sick.

It is hardly necessary to ask you to consider the splendid work of unwearied compassion ceaselessly carried on in this great city, through the agency of its medical charities.

Nearly eighty thousand in-patients and nearly

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two million out-patients are annually treated in the London hospitals and dispensaries, and more than six thousand beds are daily occupied by the sick and suffering. The total cost is more than £600,000 a year, and the permanent income of the Metropolitan hospitals is some £25,000 a year less than the expenditure. It is almost terrible to think how much depends upon the collections of to-day. If a hundred thousand pounds can be collected to-day, the hospitals will be placed on a satisfactory basis for the current year ; if this sum is not collected, it is no exaggeration to say that multitudes of the poorer classes will suffer in the stifling atmosphere of badly-ventilated and overcrowded homes.

To-day then, on this festival of mercy, when rivalry in well-doing is justifiable and laudable between different communities and denominations, I plead with all to give liberally, each in accordance with his ability, and in accordance with his appreciation of the profound revelation implied in our Lord's words, "I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink."

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CORPORATE WRONG-DOING

“If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it, and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it, and shall not He render to every man according to his works?”—
PROV. xxiv. 11, 12.

INDIVIDUAL responsibility for corporate wrong-doing is my subject to-day; and, once acknowledge that the characteristic force of the Inspired Word lies in the fact that it records unchanging attitudes of the Divine mind, and permanent types of human character, it is impossible to imagine any language that could more forcibly express individual responsibility for corporate wrong-doing than the text I have quoted. It contains the authoritative declaration of a great law of God's government of the world, namely, that each individual, possessed of the gift of reason, incurs a measure of responsibility to Almighty God for the lost,

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the neglected, the betrayed members of the human family, and that in this responsibility ignorance and inaction are equally criminal. To "forbear to deliver," or to say of the degradation and pollution which are in the world, "Behold, we knew it not," is to become a partaker in the guilt and a sharer in the condemnation.

Called upon, as I am to-day, to preach the official Jubilee sermon of the National Temperance League—a duty which necessarily implies a public impeachment of England's "national abomination of desolation"—I pause to ask if it be indeed possible that any man or woman can honestly say of this curse of Great Britain, by the instrumentality of which tens of thousands are being "drawn unto death and ready to be slain," "Behold, we knew it not."

It is no new indictment that I am commissioned to bring to-day. It is demonstrable from authoritative Parliamentary documents, and from unerring statistics, that the intemperance of England is the cancer of our national life, the heaviest curse upon our national industry, the standing insult of our national morality. It is the fruitful cause of the annihilation of the family, the prostitution of women, the violation of honour, the neglect and

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torture of children. It is proved beyond the possibility of contradiction that it is the direct cause of nine-tenths of the pauperism, three-fourths of the crime, one-half of the disease, and a large proportion of the insanity of the United Kingdom. "I looked at the hospital wards to-day," once said Sir Andrew Clark, "and I saw that seven out of ten owed their disease to alcohol." "Drink," said Dr. Forbes Winslow, the lunacy expert, "is at the head of the tabulated causes of insanity." Not one day, scarcely one hour of one day, passes unblighted by the terrible ravages of this national curse. Exaggeration, of which we temperance advocates are so often accused, is simply impossible unless you invent for us a new word and more emphatic language. From every department of the national life the witness to the deadliness of this degrading vice is myriad tongued. Police, poor-law guardians, manufacturers, merchants, employers of labour, physicians, judges, ministers of every denomination, with one voice unite in impeaching this destroyer of the happiness and purity of mankind. How is it that, side by side with the vast development of the trade and commerce of the country, the immense growth of its industrial wealth, the constant addition to the moral influences at work amongst the

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masses, that which is called the "submerged tenth" comes to exist? The answer upon the most matter-of-fact plane is that it is the logical outcome of the vast unproductive drain upon the national resources caused by the common sale of intoxicating drink. The one hundred and fifty millions and more, diverted from useful channels of trade and worse than wasted by being expended upon drink, represent but a fraction of the national loss. So long ago as 1837 a Parliamentary Committee, appointed to inquire into the subject, estimated that, in addition to the actual expenditure, the loss of labour and time to employers and workmen amounted to one-sixth of the total wealth produced by the nation; and, when to that is added the destruction of property by sea and land, the public and private charges for crime, pauperism, destitution, sickness, insanity, it becomes nothing short of a stultification of the human intellect not to perceive that half the economic problems of the nation would be solved, and the "submerged tenth" be a dream of the past if this clinging curse of drink could be swept away or even minimised.

It is, however, obvious that the vast pecuniary loss resulting from drink is the lesser of its evils. It is the deadly capacity of strong drink for stifling the moral sense, and promoting a re-

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vulsion of the human soul from God, that constitutes the public-house the recruiting ground of the criminal, the harlot, and the blasphemer, and wings the appeal to Christian reformers.

It is within my own recollection how a well-known temperance leader, now departed, was conducted by a wealthy brewer over his manufactory, and the extensive plant and machinery exhibited to him. It was at the time of the great agitation in connection with compensation, and the inequity of closing peremptorily a business with such costly plant was pointed out to him. "Yes," he replied, "it has cost much, very much, and yet one single human soul ruined, besotted, alienated from God, drugged into animalism by the stimulant which, at so much outlay, and at so large a profit, you produce is part of the life of God, and a shrine of the Holy Spirit." He was right; the worth and dignity of the God-begotten human soul is the measure of the guilt and sacrilege of financially profiting by its ruin; and whilst no man will deny that there is a certain measure of this commodity consumed without moral injury, it has been proved beyond the possibility of contradiction that the wealth—the enormous, disproportionate wealth—of many businesses, such as that of which we are speaking, is derived

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from kennels of sottish degradation in which the image of God in man is defaced for gain, almost to obliteration. As an illustration of the vast wealth thus accumulated, I note that there appeared recently in the public Press a category of the estates left by certain brewers and distillers, and of these five amounted to over ten million pounds.

But is there no improvement? Have the ceaseless, earnest efforts of the National Temperance League, and similar organisations, during fifty years been fruitless? Greatly owing to the energy and persistent advocacy of this invaluable association which for fifty years has been assiduously educating the nation, there is to be noted in recent years an awakening of the public conscience. From a Blue Book recently issued it is clear that there has been a steady decrease in the total consumption of intoxicating drink. The national drink bill has been reduced by twenty millions. Leading surgeons and physicians are recognising, and openly proclaiming, in language which when used by temperance reformers is condemned as fanatical, the inutility of alcohol as a medical remedy, and the peril of it as a daily indulgence. Many urban councils are publishing placards warning the public against the dangers of the abuse of

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alcohol. The *Times* newspaper, which has not usually been on our side, has recently, in a leading article, made the statement that: "It was not impossible that the time would come when the belief in the sustaining powers of alcohol would become as obsolete as the belief in witchcraft." But, whilst deeply thankful for these encouraging symptoms, we recognise that the evil remains colossal. As an example of the squalor, immorality, and drunkenness which still bring down the slums of our great cities to a lower level than any other country, I quote from the *Liverpool Daily Post* a statement by the Medical Officer of Health of the City of Liverpool, Dr. Hope, on the relation of drinking to the slums and filth of Liverpool: "There is no city in Christendom," he said, "as far as he knew—certainly no city in Europe—which could produce anything like the squalor found in some of the back streets of Liverpool." The conditions of existence he reveals are terrible to contemplate, and yet he calls attention to the fact that within a limited area these same people, apparently at the lowest level of poverty, are spending £5000 a year in drink. Spending £5000 a year in drink, and sleeping on straw, using soap-boxes for furniture!

And now, in the light of the passage I have

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quoted from the Book of Proverbs, I ask you to consider the question of responsibility. Great is the weight of our national responsibility in view of this prevailing curse. First, and most emphatically, the responsibility rests upon the Church. The Church is the religion of Christ organised; the Church, as an organisation, under whatever name or names, is commissioned by Christ to be in real conflict with evil everywhere; in men, in social institutions, in private life and public life, in false standards of right or wrong. The Church is simply apostatising when she pretends to bless and illumine the world while permitting a source of temptation that is earthly, sensual, devilish, to spread without sustained, emphatic, reiterated protest.

It has ever been the temptation of the organised Church, since the days of Constantine, to crystallise into ornamental externalism, to become the symbol of religious respectability, to falter in her witness against popular sins, to wait till great public vices are about to be crushed by the awakened conscience of the majority, before she dares to strike a blow at them.

I am not unmindful of the useful labours of the Church of England Temperance Society, but I contend that this effort, by itself, is in-

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adequate considering the place amongst the churches of the nation providentially occupied by the Established Church. The Established Church of England is the recognised official guide, philosopher, and friend of the nation, specially charged with the maintenance of the nation's honour and purity; nothing less than this surely is the unexpressed condition of her covenant as wedded to the State, and I venture to say that, with her unrivalled opportunities and exceptional privileges, if she had, in her corporate capacity, long ago awakened to the unspeakable evil of this curse of modern life, which is blasting our prosperity at home, mocking our efforts abroad, and imperilling our existence as a nation, and if she had authoritatively from the House of Lords and the Episcopal Bench, and officially from every pulpit, courageously drawn the sword and cast away the scabbard, the evil could not have been what it is now.

Secondly, as emphatically, though in a lower plane, the responsibility rests upon the State. The State is the embodiment into a selected few called a Government, of the public sentiment of justice, protection, and power. If it cannot, as of course it cannot, sweep away every abuse without flagrant violation of personal

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liberty, it is bound at least to prevent the monstrous growth of public evil; it can at least legislate for morality before revenue; so frame its statutes that it shall be easy for the people to do right and difficult for them to do wrong. That it has not done so in the past is proved by the existence and bitter need of "Darkest England." The most sacred interests of society are practically at the mercy of our legislators, and had they, in the past, thought less of party triumphs and more of the everlasting distinctions between right and wrong, had they been less ready to sneer down the enthusiasm of reformers as fads while they were weak and few, and pay court to them for their votes when they were strong and many, there would be less misery and degradation in England than exist to-day.

In spite of the improvement to which I have referred, the crisis was never more urgent, and certainly the moment was never more opportune, when we remember that the last General Election has resulted in the return to Westminster of a Parliament pledged to strenuous and effective legislation in the direction of minimising the curse of drink. Never was the need more pressing that men who love their country should perceive the signs of the times and the appalling

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evils that, like a gathering thunder-cloud, threaten the nation in no very far distant future unless this destroying evil is grappled with. In a well-known Spanish play there is described a son saying to a father, by whose neglect and infamy he had been degraded—

“Are you not afraid the brute you made,
Avenge the man you marred?”

It is not overstraining the analogy to apply those words to the State. The State is the father of the people, and by permission of the liquor traffic, in present conditions, the State is pandering to the animal nature and marring the manhood of the people, and all the while the power of the democracy is increasing, and the day may come when a democratised despotism, brutalised by intemperance, may terribly revenge itself upon the miserable mammon-worship and plausible social fallacies, and contemptible time-serving of public men, which have marred its manhood. Such things have happened before in other lands, and the late Mr. Henry George, who knew something of the temper of the masses, once openly said, “The Huns and Vandals who shall wreck our civilisation are being bred, not in the steppes of Asia, but in the slums of our great cities.”

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In what precise direction, by what definite legislative enactments, the State can intervene to ameliorate the present condition of affairs, is a question of confessed difficulty, and a subject more for the platform than for the pulpit. It is scarcely necessary to say that justice and common sense require that the discretionary powers formerly enjoyed by the justices shall be immediately restored to them and increased, and that a time limit shall be appointed within which all vested interests in all licences shall expire. Alteration, to this extent, of the unfortunate Act of 1904 is obvious, pressing, and imperative. Remedial legislation, in addition to this simple act of justice, must be a question for the experts. Personally, I have never wavered in my conviction that the true remedy is to cast the responsibility on the people themselves. To stimulate in every way the desire for reform, and, at the same time, to confer upon communities the prerogative of manhood, the power of choice as to whether men will or will not purge their own localities from the degrading influence of recognised centres of temptation. It is by this process that the Divine Father educates the individual man into a moral being; not by coercion from without, but by self-evolution

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from within. The first suggestion of this remedy, as applicable to the drink curse, came from the Convocation of the Southern Province of the Church of England. The report of the Committee of the Convocation of Canterbury contained the following weighty declaration:—"Inasmuch as the avowed object of licensing the sale of intoxicating liquors is to supply a public want, a legal power of restraining the issue or renewal of licences should be placed in the hands of the people most deeply interested, namely, the inhabitants themselves." It has been suggested, and the suggestion at this crisis is specially invidious, that there is dissension within the ranks of Temperance Reformers. It is the half-truth which is the blackest of untruths; there is no dissension as to the main principle. All are agreed that the highest ideal is to confer upon communities the power to veto the trade, if they desire to do so, on the ground that the trade exists for the people, and not the people for the trade. Where difference of opinion appears is with regard to the variety and character of the alternative options to be conferred upon communities not at present educated to the point of exercising the veto. It must be remembered that the Temperance question is not an abstainers' question alone—

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the abstainers are but a small minority of the total population. Without the co-operation of the earnest and thoughtful non-abstainers there can be no amelioration, and where the leading reformers of a community are convinced that the majority of the inhabitants of their locality will not adopt total prohibition, it seems just and wise that they should possess the power to mend what they are unable to end; that such alternative options as reduction of the number of licences, Sunday closing, early Saturday closing, or even what is called "disinterested management," should be included in the powers conferred upon them. If there is any dissension in the ranks of Temperance reformers it is on this question of "disinterested management." Disinterested management proposes to establish, in every district where it is adopted, a company possessing the monopoly for the sale of drink. Dividends are to be strictly limited, surplus profits are to go to the national exchequer for local distribution, and no manager is to receive a commission, or benefit in any way by the sale of intoxicants.

Though such an alternative option is far short of the ideal; though it is open to the serious objection that, inasmuch as the locality concerned will benefit by the sale of intoxicants

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it can hardly be honestly named "disinterested," as a permissive option it could not be imposed upon any locality against the will of the majority of the inhabitants, and no one can deny that, with all its faults, it would be an unspeakable improvement upon the present method, and, as the popular feeling in favour of total abstinence increases, would gradually prepare a community for a more efficient measure of self-protection in the future.

But my subject to-day is *individual* responsibility for corporate wrong-doing. The Church and the State, after all, are only abstractions. The Church of to-day is but the aggregate of the believing souls of the generation. The State is composed of the individuals of to-day who exercise the franchise; individual virtue, therefore, is loyalty, individual goodness is patriotism, individual purity is good churchmanship. We are gathered to-night in a city with the unenviable notoriety of annually amassing a drink bill amounting to £20,000,000, two-thirds of which is expended by the wage-earning classes, and we must be aware of the logical result of this financial drain; we must know that there are ruined homes and drink-blasted lives within hearing of the bells of this Abbey. Are we satisfied that the march of Christian

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civilisation shall be neutralised and blighted, that the public-house shall ride triumphant over the school and the Church, that these fountains of crime, brutality, and insanity shall continue to be?

I would rather appeal to men's pity than to men's sense of self-preservation, though by our indifference we are assuredly sowing the seed of national disruption and ruin. These brothers and sisters of ours, who are dying wholesale, cursed by drink, are not lost to feeling, they are not necessarily the low, the vulgar, the unrefined, the utterly godless; there is good, and God in them yet. They are enslaved, drugged by the delusive fascination of alcohol, which creates its own appetite, slowly saps the power of the will, lulling to sleep while it kills.

“Like the bat of Indian brakes,
Her pinions fan the wound she makes,
And soothing thus the dreamer's pain,
She drinks his life-blood from the vein.”

Such a one was the brilliant and gifted Charles Lamb. “The waters have gone over me,” he cried; “could the youth to whom the flavour of his first wine is delicious look into my desolation, could he see my fevered eye, fevered with last night's drinking and feverish

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for to-night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of death out of which I cry to be delivered, it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation."

No man could read without tears a letter which appeared some time ago in the newspapers, found in the pocket of a suicide at Liverpool. Alcohol had literally thus "drunk the life-blood from his veins," and in mental torture insupportable, he, as thousands before him have done, took his own life; but before he did the deed he wrote thus to his wife: "I have loved you very deeply, also the children, but I have not done my duty. Of course you know the cause of it—the cursed drink. I should like to see you all once more, but I cannot bear the shame; tell dear mother I am sorry for all the expense and trouble I have caused her. It is awful to think of, but I have gone too far for anything now,—good-bye!" and crash goes the bullet into his brain! Oh the pity of it, the pathos of it, the wickedness of it all! Thirty-six millions of pounds gained for the Excise from the misery of thousands such as he! We selfish, indifferent, timid Christians indirectly killed that man; it is we who "forbore to deliver him," and thousands like him, and "shall

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not He that keepeth our souls and pondereth our hearts see it, and shall not He render to every man according to His works?"

In considering individual responsibility, the solemn question obviously suggests itself, "Lord, what wilt Thou have *me* to do?" I reply, first, if you have realised the extent and deadliness of this degrading sin, ask yourself in what direction your personal influence is being exercised. If you imagine that your influence as an individual is minute, place yourself in living contact with some recognised remedial agency; become an intelligent member, and a subscribing member, of the admirable and efficient association called the National Temperance League, which is now commemorating its jubilee, and thanking God for fifty years of ceaseless and successful remedial effort. Without in any way depreciating the efficient work done by the numerous Temperance organisations in the country, I am justified in affirming that the nation owes a peculiar debt of gratitude to the National Temperance League, which has specially devoted itself to the educational and scientific aspects of the Temperance movement. Founded in 1856, under the presidency of Sir Walter Trevelyan, who was succeeded in the presidential office by noble-minded Samuel

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Bowly, and subsequently by that fearless champion, Archbishop Temple, the National Temperance League has greatly influenced various classes of the community and leavened the nation with Temperance enthusiasm.

In the calendar containing the chief items of its many operations during fifty years are recorded the demonstrations, missions, congresses, medical conferences, scientific lectures, personal appeals, educative efforts which have opened the eyes of the people of England to our national sin and the urgent need for a remedy, and I confidently appeal to this congregation, and to the public at large, to enable this most valuable organisation to redouble its efforts.

Secondly, as an individual, let the instinct of rescue, which is in you as a human being, have fair play, and see what it will lead you to do. The instinct of rescue is hereditary from our First Father. It is an essential attribute of God. It inspired the Incarnation, it stimulated the active life of the Christ of God, it flashes out in human nature in the most unexpected ways at all times. It illumines humanity, and promotes the most gallant deeds in every shipwreck, and fire, and catastrophe by sea and land. The very beasts possess it; in the

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splendid hounds of St. Bernard it exists in such perfection that again and again, by their restlessness and whining at the door of the Hospice, these noble beasts have intimated to the monks that there were travellers lost in the snow, and when released and followed have guided their masters direct to the spot where help was needed. To these dumb animals the existence of the need is an immediate call to action. They obey automatically an implanted law of their being in seeking and saving the lost. They shame the miserable self-seeking lives of most of us. If Christians sought souls as those intelligent animals seek bodies the world would soon be a foretaste of heaven.

Lastly, bestow a fair unprejudiced consideration to the principle of total abstinence for the brethren's sake, as a simple, easy, advantageous protest against the national sin. This is not the place from which to deal with the question of personal total abstinence physiologically, though the recent utterances of several of our greatest medical experts have been endorsed experimentally by tens of thousands.

When we lift our souls to God, mentally to blend our lives with His blessed life, to be fired by His holy inspiration, we find all the Divine character embodied for purposes of

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observation in the Lord Jesus, not only as an example outside us, but as a vital force within us ready to dominate our lives. Read the fifth chapter of St. Mark's Gospel. How did He, who was the manifestation in absolute perfection of that immanent Divine Sonship which is the glory and attribute of Humanity as a whole—how did He heal that woman with the issue of blood? He administered no medicine. He simply gave *Himself*: He permitted, projected from Himself, an impartation of His own loving, healing life. It is the picture lesson of the true exercise of the instinct of rescue; you must give *yourself*. The nation, with its issue of blood, its life draining from it by the unspeakably wasting disease of intemperance, will be truly healed, not by nostrums and schemes and financial remedies, but by whole-hearted men and women who will give themselves, body and soul, as living sacrifices for the life and health of their fellow-men; that is the core of the total abstinence movement.

“Oh, Theobald Mathew,” said Martin the Quaker, “what couldst thou not do if thou wouldst struggle to drive away this fiend from the desolate homes of thy people.” Father Mathew thought, and prayed, and decided, and rose from his knees with the words—“Here

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goes in the Name of God," as he signed the total abstinence pledge. Upon these grounds the practice of personal total abstinence is not only unassailable, it is the very principle of the Gospel, for "we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves, for even Christ pleased not Himself." I pray that many who know that their lives are "hid with Christ in God," and that humanity is an organic unity in which each item has its responsibility and its influences, may "go and do likewise."

“IF THOU HADST KNOWN”

“O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thy help.”—HOSEA xiii. 9.

THE characteristic teaching underlying the Gospel for the tenth Sunday after Trinity, considered together with the Scripture I have quoted, is, that bitter sorrow for the consequences of misused opportunity in the education of this life, involving either national or individual self-destruction, is not inconsistent with perfect unclouded confidence in the ultimate restitution of the self-destroyed. “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself”; there is a terrible apparent finality in this; human perversity can go no further; the limit of moral self-destruction is reached. “But in Me is thy help.” The inexhaustible resources of the Omnipotent Self-Evolver cannot be frustrated by the perversity of the creature.

If ultimate perfection is an end divinely determined, and the constitution and capacity

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of man, as well as the declarations of Scripture, bear witness that it is, then its ultimate accomplishment is certain. God's helpfulness is more powerful than man's self-destruction.

Two thoughts demand expression to-day :

First, an emphasising of the God-honouring creed of optimism; the unclouded assurance of an ultimately victorious Father, a perfectly vindicated Saviour, and a universally restored humanity.

Secondly, a direct contradiction to the misrepresentation, with which I am constantly confronted, namely, that optimism produces indolence, want of sympathy with the struggles of the race, indifference to missionary effort, encouragement to live in self-indulgence, and to say, "If all is going to be right in the end, what does anything matter?"

First, to emphasise optimism: can we do this too often? It is a weary, weary world; it is full of all that distresses, defiles, and destroys. What an unspeakable claim the facts of human life establish on the Creator of human life. I sometimes think that our Father, if ever He could be taken by surprise, which, of course, is impossible, must be surprised, not that men are bad, but positively surprised that men are not worse. Life would

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be unendurable if we had to believe in a God blind and deaf to the sorrows of His world; if we had to believe in the theory of that delightful Christian - Science story “Jewel,” where Jewel says, “Grandpa, God doesn’t know you have rheumatism.” It is possible to endure when we know we have a God, living, sympathising, human, sharing in everything, Who does know when we have rheumatism; Who cares for the tears of a child and the heart-aches of a man, and Who has pledged Himself with His Omnipotent “shall,” that, however wild the tempest, eternal calm shall come at last; however apparently victorious the evil within and without, the last enemy shall be destroyed; “destruction shall come to a perpetual end,” and “God shall be all in all.”

We need often to remind each other, we pilgrims, that our Father has not abdicated His Throne; the film is on our eyes, we “see through a glass darkly,” the confusion perplexes us; the sufferings of animals, the unmerited pain of children, the disproportionate chastisement that seems to fall to the lot of some, such as the physical suffering I have recently witnessed in the case of several who have passed to the higher life; these experiences seem to violate our superficial and human sense

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of justice, and we need to establish each other by the constant remembrance that our Father is immanent in it all, and pledged to evolve an "exceeding weight of glory" from the travail pains of human life. God's optimist is not asked to explain, he does not ask why, his attitude is to labour, and to wait, and to trust; trust is more precious in the eyes of Abba Father when it is tested by adversity, when it knows absolutely no limits, when it holds up its head against the most staggering blow, and calmly says—

"God's greatness rolls around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His rest, and
Every cloud that floats above and
Veileth love, itself is love."

Why, then, did Jesus weep over the National Suicide of Israel? Was not He an optimist? Did not He know that "all Israel shall be saved"? Was not He the very embodiment of those "Alls" of God on which optimism is based? Yes, He knew it, and the fact that though knowing it, He wept, is the unanswerable contradiction to the contention that belief in ultimate restitution tends to make men indifferent to present experience. Our Lord is illustrating the sorrow in the heart of the Father-God, Immanent and seeking to express

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Himself, at all rebellion, self-destruction, suicidal stubbornness, in this weary world. He is solemnly indicating the place and power of human volition in the education of this present age. As a true patriot, tenderly loving the city of His ancestors, deeply sympathising with the deluded populace, He is weeping because the spiritual blindness of the people made the awful catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem, and its attendant horrors, inevitable. “He who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock,” but ruled he must be; and Jesus is weeping because Israel chose to be “ruled by the rock.” To choose is man’s act. Professor Huxley, the tendency of whose thought was to conclude that men are not free agents, but intelligent machines worked by vital forces, says (without, I think, weighing the inconsistency), “A human being, though a machine, is capable, within certain limits, of self-adjustment”; and again he says, “Our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events”; just so, and what is this capability of self-adjustment that counts for something in the course of events? It is the Divine Sonship in man, the inmost capacity that must be “born from above”; if it were not there, no responsibility

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would attach to us; it would be utterly unreasonable on God's part to expect anything from us: "Dwelt no power divine within us, how could God's divineness win us?" But it does dwell within us, and its function is to direct the will, as my brain directs my hand. If you know this you have made a great discovery; you cannot define it, neither can you express harmony by logic, or define love by mathematics. You cannot enclose within the limits of a formula the "mind of Christ," which, when found within you, enables you to see through the earthly into the heavenly, through the apparent into the real, through the shadow into the substance; it is the "secret of the Lord," and the "secret of the Lord" is the Immanence of God, the recognition that there is a "soul in all things, and that soul is God," that there is "one Body," the illimitable universe, and "one Spirit," the Immanent Infinite Mind, and that the cosmic consciousness which constitutes the pulse of life in all things is specially and peculiarly self-conscious in man, as the indwelling of the Logos, or "the mind of Christ."

"If thou hadst known," said our Lord. If your knowledge comes from the interior "mind of Christ," how the outlook on the world is

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changed! The phenomena of life without the “secret of the Lord” resemble the melancholy moaning of the wind through a mass of suspended telegraph wires; the secret of the wire is hidden in its heart, invisible, inaudible; through it are flashing messages, words of love and wisdom and power, while the outside eye sees only the mass of wires and the outside ear hears only the moaning of the wind through the wires.

The starting-point for the exercise of this knowledge must be finding Christ within us, the assurance that God, the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, does dwell in us always; and, though this discovery will not be a sense-experience on the plane of intellectual apprehension, it is well to address this Immanent Universal Mind and say with strong conviction, “Infinite Spirit, I cannot think Thee, but I know Thy life pulses through all that is, and that Thou art in me as my deepest being.”

Certain inferences follow. “If thou hadst known.” If you know the truth of the Immanence of God, you are preserved from the fantastic suggestion of one prominent school of thought that all evil exists in man’s wrong thinking. This suggestion implies that the Immanent Originator was taken by surprise,

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and suffered the marring of His handiwork from want of sufficient foresight, whereas you know that moral evil is the necessary consequence of the activity of the Divine Immanent Logos raising, unknown to us, a standard within us in contrast with which actions that are prompted by carnal mind alone are evil, and that, by the experience of this contrast, we are being educated. Paul states it boldly: "The creature was made subject to vanity," that is, to the discipline of these contrasts, "not willingly, but by reason of Him (that is God) Who subjected it."

Then, again, the knowledge of the universality of this central consciousness, this belief that God "sleeps in the stone, dreams in the plant, awakens in the animal, and is self-conscious in man," indicates that matter, so far from being a thought-illusion, a non-existent phantasm, is a veritable garment of God. They who despise matter forget that the conception of an Infinite God includes matter. As the earth-spirit in Faust says:

"So at the roaring loom of time I ply,
And weave for God the garment that thou seest Him by."

From these garments, garments of matter, from these common phenomena of our earthly lives, God, the Immanent Spirit, is constantly

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appealing to us. “If thou hadst known.” Once before the Lord Jesus, the peculiar embodiment of this universally Immanent Logos, spoke those suggestive words. It was to the woman at the well of Sychar. “If thou hadst known,” He said, “who it was that said unto thee, ‘Give Me to drink,’ thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.”

And this brings us to the esoteric suggestion underlying the pathetic lament of the Divine compassion Incarnate recorded in this morning’s¹ Gospel, and we see that it is a continuation of the thought as to the Immanence of the Divine as our real self, and contains a picture of the appeal of the Father to the capacity for responding, for the due exercise of which we are responsible “in this our day.” “If thou hadst known,” He says. What knowledge does He mean? What is knowledge? It is interesting to study the frantic attempts of the great philosophic writers to define knowledge; the Platonists, the Stoics, Whateley, Hamilton, Mill, have filled pages with their attempts. And yet we know what we mean when we use the word “knowledge” on the ordinary human plane; we mean the consciousness of certain facts and phenomena acquired by experience, or as the

¹ The tenth Sunday after Trinity.

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result of the exercise of the faculties of observation and thought. Now, consider, is it to this Knowledge that the Christ appeals? Do the things which belong to man's peace depend upon the development of his brain power? Is it only the aristocrats of the intellect who will enter into the fruition of the Beatitude, "This is life eternal that they may know Thee"? Though undoubtedly the sequences of moral and religious truth involve processes of reasoning, and a theology that could not stand before argument would be self-condemned, surely the knowledge spoken of here is the result of a higher, profounder reason than the reason of the natural man. There is a knowledge which is not the result of the exercise of the faculties of observation and intellectual activity. There are within us two centres, and originating founts, of knowledge. Paul differentiated them sharply as, one, the "carnal mind," and the other, the "mind of Christ." Schelling names them, the one, "ordinary consciousness," the other, "the capacity above and beyond ordinary consciousness"; Jacob Böehme speaks of them as "scientific knowledge and inward light." All philosophic minds have recognised these two distinct centres of thinking, and indicate that they work on different planes. Paul says that

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the “natural man,” that is, the man doing his thinking on the intellectual plane alone, “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” There is then a duality of thought and impulse and acquisition within us ; this duality was recognised, and in a celebrated passage immortalised, by Ovid, the pagan poet. The Christian revelation has interpreted and emphasised it. If you ask yourself, what am I ? The answer is : “ I am spirit, God thought-generated me, the real me, in His own image and likeness, and God is Spirit, so I am spirit. God, the All-Father, has projected me into terrestrial birth, and has implanted me in an hereditary flesh nature. My hereditary God-nature is spirit, the ‘ mind of Christ,’ the real ego ; my hereditary flesh nature is intellect, carnal mind, coming to conclusions from external observation and sensuous impressions.” There is, then, latent in all, a faculty of knowledge which transcends phenomena, a knowledge of close vital union with a Parent-Spirit whom you cannot intellectually think, because to form a mental concept of that Being would be to condition, to limit. You can only form an intellectual concept of anything by mentally differentiating it from something else. You

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cannot, therefore, think the Infinite unoriginated Parent-Soul, the cause of all causes, who is God, because there is nothing from which, or from whom, you can mentally differentiate Him, and yet you know Him by this inner knowledge with an intensity of conviction that needs no logical syllogism to justify it. It is useless to try and define this inner intuitive knowledge. If the philosophers cannot define intellectual knowledge, we cannot define this splendid assurance which is an activity of the inmost centre of our being, the outcome of that which Browning calls "the immortal centre in us all where truth abides in fulness." And "the secret of the Lord" is the faculty of spiritual discernment which enables us to know that all visible things are a sacrament of the Presence of God, that every incident of the commonest daily life thinly veils a great divine purpose for us, that we are surrounded and enfolded by the care of God, that the Almightyness and love of our Father is perpetually appealing to us; that a strange prophet in our streets, as at Jerusalem, a way-farer asking for water by a well-side as at Sychar, may be the hidden majesty of God seeking to train us, to call out something in us, to sanctify us; that a crisis calling for decision in our daily life, a summons to duty which puts principle to

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the test, an appeal to our generosity, kindness, self-control, are not mere chance, but the operation of the unseen Educator haunting our lives in love, that He may develop our characters, cultivate our higher propensities, and lead us (without forcing us) to seek the things which belong to our peace.

“If thou hadst known.” Does not the experience of our own lives bear witness? If during this past week we had only known, when perhaps we sharply refused that request, when we petulantly wounded that heart that loved us, when we unreasonably misunderstood that speech or that action of another, when we shrank from the truth that crucifies, and sought refuge in the lie that shields; if we had known that God was in that opportunity, that it was He Who was saying, “Give Me to drink,” that it was He who was suggesting that action, that obedience, that sacrifice! If we had looked at events with the spiritual eye rather than the natural, our whole conduct would have been changed; and now those opportunities are gone. I often think of that incident in the early married life of Queen Victoria in Scotland, before she was known to the crofters. She once in heavy rain entered a Highland cottage and asked the loan of a plaid, and being unrecognised was refused. On the

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following day the cottager discovered that he had refused the request of his sovereign, and cried out, "If I had only known who it was that said unto me lend me the garment!" but that opportunity was gone for ever. Yes, if we had only known how near God is to us in the incidents of daily life; that those higher thoughts which flashed across the soul we knew not whence, that momentary consciousness of a purer light than common life could show us, that soul-whisper which condemned or approved our secret deeds and thoughts and words, were not chance or fancy, but the presence, the breath, the pleading, the indescribable nearness, nay, the oneness, of our ever-present Immanent Father, "in Whom we live and move and have our being," we should have "asked of Him, and He would have given us living water."

The final thought is this. It is well to form the mental habit of knowing that God is in everything that happens to us. Do not be led astray by the delusion that matter is not, and that God knows nothing of matter. Penetrate the garment of phenomena, of incident, of occurrence, in which He is hidden. "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself," said the prophet; but as He is everywhere, and always

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Love everywhere, we can find Him in every hiding-place. Say with Cowper :

“In the vast, and in the minute, we see
The unambiguous footsteps of the God,
Who gives its lustre to the insect’s wing,
And wheels His Throne upon the rolling worlds.”

To “know the things which belong to our peace,” may then be summed up as the recognition of God in everything.

“Earth’s crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God.”

That we can obtain this attitude of mental outlook, or rather I should say inlook ; that we can reach to this divine “knowledge centre” within us, is implied by the fact that we must do it, and by the fact of the tears of the Incarnate Lord over Jerusalem because they would not do it.

It is the old injunction. The process is by becoming thought-immersed in God. It is, at some arranged period of solitude, to close the conscious mind to all theories, theologies, definitions, accommodations, externals, symbols, and just be alone with God the Spirit—*solus cum solo*. “Whoso dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” While you are there, in the

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secret place, no sorrow touches you, no anxiety frets you ; you are in full spirit-communion with the beloved on the other side, you are in vital union with the Divine, originating, upholding Father-Soul. While abiding under the shadow of the Almighty you cannot hear the roar of the machinery of the world. You are in peace, for "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

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“The Lord in Whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.”—JOB xii. 10.

THE Epistle for to-day provides the obvious Scripture for “Animal Sunday,” and the occurrence of Romans viii. as the Epistle for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity is the reason for the selection of this particular Sunday as Animal Sunday. I have spoken so constantly, and written so much upon that most comprehensive and instructive eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, that I turn to-day to that ancient inexhaustible Oriental poem called the Book of Job, the exalted conceptions in which contain irrefragable proof of its Divine inspiration. It is to me a fact full of significance that there are discoverable in the poem called the Book of Job constant anticipations of the self-revelation of God contained in the highest Christian philosophy. In the words I have quoted, for example, “the Lord” is recognised as the one Infinite Universal Spirit

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expressing Himself in all that is. The Lord is declared to be the One Eternal Substance or Principle of which animals, human and non-human, are manifestations and forms. The Lord is described as the Universal Soul, the soul of the beast world, the soul of the bird world, the soul of the tree world, the soul of the flower world, the soul of the man world. "There is one body," the illimitable universe, and one Spirit, "the Lord in Whose hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind." Now, suppose we are truly based upon this profound conception, this noble plea that God shall not be wholly external to the universe that expresses Him, this faith which St. Paul claimed as the inmost truth of Christian mysticism in his cry: "Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things," what have we gained? This — We have parted with the old materialistic Deistic conception of the external Ruler of the universe which has terrorised the world for ages. We have in His place a God very nigh at hand, and, as Paul says, "not far off from every one of us." We have an ever-present, ever-blessing, ever-working Father-Mother God. We have a conception of the Eternal Being, which, without solving or professing to solve a single riddle

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of this painful earth, illumines the darkness of the problems, and mitigates the pain of the education by including all in God. There are—there will be—puzzles that we cannot solve. There will be, in the lives of all of us, moments—more than moments—sometimes weeks, of utter dereliction, when we cry, “Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani.” But the moral sensibilities of the rightly based will assuredly recover, and the deepest instincts of our nature will in due time remind us that we, and those we love, are in God, and God in us, and in them, and we shall be able to say, “Father, into Thy hands we commend all human spirits”; a certain calm and unimpassioned common sense will come into our lives; we shall recognise that we are not victims of chance or fate, but expressions of the Supreme Creative Father Spirit, Who is the driving power behind evolution, and Whose unchangeable purpose is to mould, in His own way, every son to the perfection of which Jesus is the ideal specimen.

Again, in this conception there is no room for disloyal thoughts of God, because of the pain in the universe, and the catastrophes that distress us. Without what we call catastrophe there would be no increase of knowledge. We have no right to send a rotten ship to sea and

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pray God to keep it in the storm. We have no right to build a railway bridge with faulty iron girders, and pray God to keep in safety the trains that pass over it. We have no right to neglect ventilation and safety lamps and precautions, and pray God there shall be no mine explosions. In a universe where this was possible, and under a God Who shielded His school-children from the results of their own folly, there could be no progress, no knowledge, no motive for self-control and honest work, no stimulus to invention, no understanding how to master, utilise, and shape the cosmic forces of the earth. And as for death, which some instinctively fear, and which is a horrible and detestable thing, utterly repulsive in all its incidents and details, we shall recognise it as part of the loving eternal purpose; as the passing of the true spiritual ego to continue education elsewhere and under other conditions. "What is so universal as death," said Schiller, "must be a benefit." Obviously; because it is one of the conditions of life, part of the universal order, one more step onwards, evolution carried into the unseen—into those conditions where we shall have bodies of a nobler material, and find ourselves in a world of purer substance.

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Another point gained will be this: Inasmuch as every relationship becomes, in the light of this truth, an expression of a Divine purpose, not only because He has ordained it, but because He is in it, our attitude towards our fellow-men will be changed. It is not by chance that we are what we are—husband, wife, parent, child, brother, sister, fellow-citizens, comrades. As the immanence of God in humanity is a transcendent fact and not a beautiful dream, all these relationships are manifestations of His purpose, and if we are mentally emancipated from the decayed anachronisms of Deism, we shall not only fulfil our home obligations with higher ideals, but we shall be sharers in every enterprise of amelioration for the race, and recognise our responsibility for discovering and helping to unfold the hidden divine life in all, however fallen and degraded. Then, again, how inevitably, how obviously, the comprehensiveness of these words from the poem of Job include our responsibility for the animals other than man. This creative Intelligence, immanent in all that is, which though a logical and metaphysical inference inevitable, is quite unthinkable, is interpreted by the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the unit of the universe,

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the consummation, the climax, the sum total, the perfect manifestation of this immanence and in Him we learn as a certainty, that which we were only able to infer before, namely, that this immeasurable reality which is the substance, the *οὐσία*, of all that is, is not a blind force, but a responsible and beneficent power, "in Whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." Therefore, in the ocean of universal existence, we, and the animals we call lower, sink or swim together; that is to say, that every argument for our immortality applies with equal cogency to them. The true argument for immortality is not based on instinct or emotion, or probability, or the logical necessity for an after-world in which to redress the inequalities of this world—these are all strong arguments that produce moral conviction; but the only irrefragable argument is that each differentiated living thing is a complete thought of the Creator, which He can never unthink. God has thought us, and so long as God is, we are. And the animals other than man are also embodiments, expressions of the Eternal Reason, the Divine mind; and it is wholly unphilosophical to imagine that anything once thought by the Divine mind can ever be unthought, and

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become nothing or no "think." Moreover, it is wholly irrational to advance against the immortality of animals the argument used by Pius IX., when he refused to allow the S.P.C.A. to be initiated in Rome. *Non sono Christiani! Non sono Christiani!* You might say the same of some of the noblest races of men. But is it true? So far as we know, the animals other than man do not recognise the objective manifestation of God in our Lord Jesus Christ; I say, so far as we know. They certainly did appear to acknowledge Him as distinct in some degree from the human race. He was with the wild beasts in the wilderness, and they harmed Him not. He was ever drawing analogies and pointing morals from the animals: the lion, the lamb, the hen, the sparrow—all formed texts for His teaching, or analogies of Himself. And Scripture constantly speaks of these fellow-creatures of ours as praying: "The young lions seek their meat from God," "the young ravens call upon Him"; and the poem of Job speaks of their souls; and whatever may be your conception of a soul, you will allow that it must come under the philosophical definition of uncompounded essence, and therefore indestructible. They may possibly be unprovided with those special spheres of will, curiosity,

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imagination, and self-centredness wherein temptation is supposed to be active, and where sin is possible; but, anyhow, they are included in Justin Martyr's well-known definition, that all who live according to the Logos—that is, all who obey the innate Divine impulse within, are really Christians, though unconsciously. Personally, I am content to base my conviction of the immortality of animals upon the same arguments that convinced Luther, Wesley, Toplady, Cowper, Southey, Tennyson, Bishop Butler, John Keble, Pope, Byron, Kingsley, Dean Stanley, General Gordon, and the rest of the long list of thoughtful men, who all believed firmly in the immortality of the animals other than man. I do not propose to enter at length into details, but if I am asked what is my demand on behalf of the animals, I reply in the words of Prov. xxxi. 8: "Open thy mouth for the dumb." Confronted with the truth foreshadowed in the poem of Job, that there is but one life of which these beings are sharers, protect them from all who purposely or from thoughtlessness make their lives a curse. Speak for them, take their part, in the home, in the street, everywhere; protest against needless cruelty in sport, in bonnet adornment, in dress decoration, in slaughter-

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houses. Support all recognised organisations for the protection of animals; public opinion is tending that way, help it. The influence of the Queen has terminated the senseless cruelty of shooting tame pigeons from traps at Hurlingham; a strong protest is rising against the cruel method of snaring hares and rabbits by the use of the steel-tooth traps. Then I urge you to become sympathising and subscribing members of the National Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection, the office of which is at 92 Victoria Street. Language fails me in expressing all that I feel as to the suffering inflicted upon helpless animals in vivisection laboratories. In vivisection the dominion of man over the lower animals has degenerated into the most unjustifiable tyranny. It can only lead to one result, and there is abundant evidence that it has already led to it. Every argument that the advocates of vivisection use, applies with far greater force to experiments on human subjects. You say, perhaps, that a very marked distinction exists between animals and men, in the fact that we have the right to slay the lower animals for food, and we have not the right to slay the human animal for food. I allow the force of the argument, though it is

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well to notice that in the allegorical epitome of origins in Genesis, that sanction was not given to Adam, though it seems to be clearly given to Noah. Also, in St. Peter's vision of the animals let down from heaven, which, observe, we are distinctly told were taken back into heaven, the words, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat," do seem to assume a sanction for killing for food; but the words are not: Arise, Peter, torture and vivisect, satisfy thy curiosity as to the mechanism of flesh and blood, by laying bare quivering nerve and muscle. Then I would add this caution; refuse to allow your eyes to be blinded by assurances as to the use of anæsthetics. A first inoculation may be a mere pin-prick. If a poisonous serpent stung you, you would only feel a pin-prick; the agony would come later. And what are these inoculations? The knowledge that special poisonous germs are developed in different diseases brings us no nearer to their cure. Sound observation is rapidly discrediting this system called serumtherapy as a dangerous and futile delusion. In India it has failed to check the plague, which has been practically extirpated in Egypt by careful sanitation. One of the most pitiful scenes in history was the rush of consumptives to Berlin to secure Koch's boasted cure for phthisis. Lymph was sold at

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a guinea a bottle; vast sums were voted for inoculation hospitals in Germany. And now the bubble is burst, and nothing but contempt remains for the unscientific and mischievous method. No. Serumtherapy is doomed to the ridicule of a future generation. A very thoughtful doctor recently said: "Inoculation is the last effort of medical despair. Prevention of disease by natural agencies should be the only aim of medical investigation." So to-day, Animal Sunday, whatever be the daily occupation of any, whether a worker with the hands or a worker with the brain, I beseech you to add to your convictions a sense of responsibility for all living creatures, which, in their measure, are expressions of that Being of beings who fills and transcends the created universe. Do your utmost to make the world less painful for these patient, humble, useful, beautiful fellow-creatures, who cannot form combinations to protect themselves. Perhaps in a higher and better world they will thank you. Perhaps they will repay you in the great restoration which is promised in the Epistle of to-day,¹ when "the whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." We shall certainly meet

¹ Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

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them, for we are assured that they are to join in the Chorus of Praise to the "Lord in Whose hand is the soul of every living thing," when the education of this puzzling world is over, for St. John says, in his prophetic vision of the glorious end: "And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, heard I saying: Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne for ever and ever, Amen."

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“Your life is hid with Christ in God.”—COL. iii. 3.

THE power, the influence, the capacity to assure and stimulate of this God-inspired utterance is marred and minimised by the narrowness, the timidity, the theological exclusiveness with which it is received. There is, moreover, a certain justifiable humility, a deep consciousness of unworthiness, hindering us from appropriating to ourselves so transcendent a declaration. We are prepared to allow that it may perhaps be true of St. Paul, of St. Francis de Sales, of a select few of the aristocrats of the Kingdom of Heaven, of the saints of God in every age, who stand forth from amongst their fellows as stars of light and standards of holiness, who are like those mountain peaks of the higher Alps that are gilded with the rose of dawn while surrounding valleys are still in darkness: but as to ourselves we are con-

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strained to say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me. I cannot attain unto it."

And yet, since God is God, the thought-transcending boundless Parent-Source of all that is, His written message, in what we call the Bible, is an appeal from the Universal Spirit to the human race as a whole. The utterances of Holy Scripture are not excluding shibboleths, for the consolation of the few and the damnation of the many, but declarations of All-Fatherhood for the uplifting of the whole. And in its deepest, widest, truest sense, this majestic utterance, so mysterious, so profound, is a re-statement of the ancient truth shadowed forth by the prophet Ezekiel, "Behold, all souls are mine, saith the Lord God." And it represents not so much a standard of attainment as a declaration of essential nature; it is not a consummation to which we may arrive after a lifetime of struggle and conflict, but the starting-point from which to commence the upward and the Godward life. In considering, then, this declaration of the Apostle, we should see it, not as some meaningless incantation like the tricky utterances of the ancient oracles, but as a trumpet-call to slumbering faith, a stimulus to unawakened powers, a summons to the seminal

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God-germ which is hidden in the inmost of the nature of man.

But how shall we grasp it? We live in a hurrying age; the high pressure of the claims of daily duty render close mental concentration upon spiritual things very difficult; earth's many voices silence these soul whispers which are so interior and so profound, and our minds habitually function from the plane of the material; consequently, we live in the outward, and suffer the penalty of bewilderment, anxiety, and doubt. Resolutely to shut out at times the material and the temporal, to open the whole being to the inward and the spiritual, to think oneself into conscious oneness with the central Source, mentally to absorb and personally to appropriate such a saying as this, "Your life is hid with Christ in God," is to experience, while the mood remains, an unspeakable rest, a consciousness of security in the midst of tempest, an assurance of the close presence and perfect sympathy of the hidden (deeply hidden) Immanent Father-Soul, shaping, guiding, influencing every event, every circumstance in life's discipline, towards a definite and special end, purposed by Him from all eternity.

It is because I believe that whatever is most profoundly spiritual is in reality most directly

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practical, that I ask you to think into and personally appropriate the transcendent saying, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Your life; that strange solitary mystery that you call yourself; that bundle of fears, doubts, aspirations, hopes, determinations, that combine to make you; it is all held, embosomed, hid, "with Christ in God." How do I know this? It is by no means impossible that this intimate relationship to God may be recognised intellectually, by the natural process of logical thought. St. Paul, preaching at Mars' Hill, definitely appeals to the Athenians as "the off-spring" of God, inasmuch as life and intelligence cannot proceed from non-life and non-intelligence. Professor Huxley once said, "There is nothing more illogical than atheism." This is obviously true, and the automatic "natural selection" theory of the origin of man, namely, that intelligence has proceeded from non-intelligence, from the irrational operation of atoms of the universe, is a flat contradiction to reason and common sense.

You would not say of the bronze effigy of Lord Salisbury in Westminster Abbey, "No sculptor made that effigy; it was made by the mould; the mould helped the variations of the metal in the direction of the statue." Not more

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illogical and absurd is the non-Theistic natural selection theory, namely, that consciousness, morality, love, responsibility, intelligence, are the result of the age-long strivings of senseless atoms of self-created matter. And if, as is absolutely certain by the laws of logic, conscious moral intelligence is the outcome of an originating Supreme moral intelligence, then the conclusion is irresistible, that this Supreme moral intelligence is the unifying principle, the higher self, immanent in all being and in all life; and there is a sense in which the life of every man, however spiritually stifled by the poisonous atmosphere of the degradation in which he lives, is held in the grip of God, hidden in the bosom of God, indwelt by God, the object of God's care and God's responsibility, though, as yet, he knows it not, as the unborn child knows not how near it is to the mother's beating heart.

There is, however, a clearer demonstration of the close relationship between God and man than is provided by logical reasoning, and that is Divine revelation appealing to the spiritual intuitions. Intellectual convictions have their undoubted value, but they rarely affect human practice; intuitions, touched by inspiration, transfigure conduct. "Your life," says the

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Apostle, addressing believers, "is hid with Christ in God." The historic Christ, the embodied, living, tangible message from our Father to His vast human family, is the manifestation in time relations of the mystic Christ, with Whom our life is hid with God.

Consider the force of this proposition, realise how it affirms the inseverability of God and man. It would be equally true if it were reversed, if the Apostle had said, "God's life is hid with Christ in you." For Christ, the historic Christ, is the declaration, the manifestation, the guarantee of God's method of dwelling in man. The historic Christ is the peculiar unique embodiment or incarnation of the Word, or Logos, or eternal Reason of God, which, as the mystic Christ, has always been immanent in every human being since the world was. The historic Christ is the divinely provided specimen of that germ of Sonship, that ray of God's own life, which has always been enshrined in every man. It was not known, it was concealed, it was unrecognised, until manifested in the historic Christ. St. Paul speaks of it as "the mystery hid from the foundation of the world." To make it known, to reveal clearly God's idea of the common nature and boundless possibilities of man, this Logos, or Word, or outshining of the

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Divine Reason, which is the inmost in every man, centred, by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the Virgin Mary, in overwhelming intensity in One Man. An intensity so overwhelming that whoso looked upon Him, looked upon God tabernacling in flesh, for "in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." But this same life, Jesus teaches us, is in its measure hid in us: and He invites us to appropriate, by faith, His victory over the world, His death unto the lower nature, and with His life striving within us as the mystic Christ, and His arms twined around us as the objective Christ, to rise slowly out of the conditions and infirmities of our finite nature. He promises never to leave us, to be with us to the end of the age. He undertakes to feed the germinal Christ life within us with His own life. He gives us an outward and visible sign of eating and drinking, in which that mystery of a human spirit feeding on its parent spirit, as a babe feeds upon its mother's bosom, shall be consummated and guaranteed; and the Lord Jesus, manifesting in His Person the mystic Christ within us, believed in, trusted, clung to, sacramentally fed upon, becomes the ever-present power to overcome weakness, ignorance, and sin, and the guarantee of man's identification

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with God, and thus, essentially, influentially, divinely, is the believer's life "hid with Christ in God."

Consider, what ought to be the result of a penetrating apprehension of this astonishing revelation of the nearness of God to our souls. First, without doubt, a profound soul-peace in the storms of life. I imagine that, in every age, the sensitive, the watchful, they to whom the darker mysteries of the world's history present themselves with painful force, have imagined that their own day was a day of peculiar crisis. Every sensitive heart feels it now. The collective force of the various evidences of the present time, contemplated solely from the materialistic plane, directly tend to pessimism. New conditions appear to be arising all the world over of tremendous significance. Whether it be the menace to the peace of Europe from the manifest increase of the war-spirit, the ceaseless cry for armaments and implements of destruction, the feverish terrorism and mistrust of other nations, which is the prevailing mood of the moment, a condition voiced in a recent article in the *Daily News* in the words:—

" . . . We look round Europe at the present moment, and we find that the code of morality

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which nearly all acknowledge or profess is in reality almost disregarded. Take the international situation first as most conspicuously in contradiction with our professions. There is not a vestige of Christianity in the behaviour of Christian nations towards each other and to the outside world. Never since Christianity came has there been a time when the course of nations was so marked by violence and the power of aggression. Opportunity and strength are recognised as the sole guides for international behaviour."

Or whether it be the alarming dislocation of the relations between labour and capital throughout Europe, or the notoriously unstable equilibrium of our whole commercial system, threatening us with the loss of our supremacy in the markets of the world, the general situation appears pregnant with the possibilities of national disaster. Now the man who believes, and in his highest moments realises, that his inmost life, and all inmost life, is "hid with Christ in God," is absolutely assured, that behind the complex problems of actual particulars and details in this infant school of a world, boundless intelligence, administering boundless power, is, as the Book of Wisdom says, "mightily, smoothly, and sweetly ordering all things"; and though human perversity

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may be, and will be, an exceeding bitterness to his spirit, that man "will not be afraid of any evil tidings, for his heart standeth fast in the Lord."

But he will not be idle, he will not sink into a condition of indifferentism or quietism; he will be irresistibly constrained by his very optimism, and his belief in the Universal Immanence of the mystic Christ, to seek and to save all who are in unrighteousness and misery. For example, it has been conspicuously proved during the late Congress that the immense proportion of the misery of this vast city arises from one notorious cause. The intemperance of England is the open cancer of our national life, the curse of our national industry, the insult to our national morality. It is the cause of the annihilation of the family, the prostitution of woman, the neglect and torture of children. The most accurate statisticians in the kingdom have proved that it is the direct cause of nine-tenths of the pauperism, three-fourths of the crime, one-half of the disease, and one-third of the insanity of the United Kingdom. The attitude of the believer in St. Paul's motto towards this curse will be that he will enter into the battle against an evil which hinders the evolution of a God-

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souled humanity, without caring the weight of a floating thistle-down whether he burns his fingers or not. His remedial efforts will be based on Burke's noble motto: "Despise popularity, do your duty to the utmost of your ability, win the approval of your own conscience, and leave the consequences to God."

Finally, this noble motto, "Your life is hid with Christ in God," will sustain you with lofty assurance in the hour of silence, of suffering, of bereavement, of approaching death. I have seen more than one member of this church meet death with that calm fearlessness which arises from perfect trust in God and from nothing else. In one instance never to be effaced from my memory, a dying man whispered to me: "What I have learnt in the last two years in St. John's Church has made it so much easier for me to die." Yes; and how much easier for those who loved him to see him die; for at that moment of supreme anguish the only consolation is the absolute assurance that the life of the departing loved one is "HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD."

THE POWER OF A SYMBOL

"I indeed baptize you with water. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."—ST. MATT. iii. 11.

THE Baptist is using a symbol. The word symbol is derived from the Greek *sumbolon*—"things taken together"—and the force of a symbol lies in its characteristic likeness to that which it symbolises. Since the adoption into the language of the word "symbol," the patient investigators of mysteries have learned many things and unlearned some. The inspired German artisan of the sixteenth century, Jacob Böehme, in his book *Signatura rerum*, which was not discovered till after his death, developed, more perhaps than any other man, the new science of symbolisms and correspondences, leading to the conception of the unity of the immanent life in all things. On his lines, though not purposely on his lines, more educated men have thought. The religious world owes, for example, more than it probably recognises to that great thinker, Mr. Herbert Spencer. When

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Mr. Herbert Spencer's *First Principles* appeared, there was a flutter of alarm in the doves of the unco-orthodox, just as the first appearance of the steam-plough in Central India sent all the Hindoos in panic to their temples. Now we recognise that he was the prophet of a method of thought which liberates from the material plane, destroys atheism, and necessitates the logical inference that the universe has been evolved by a conscious, all-filling, irresistible, infinite, and eternal mind.

Such men as Mr. Herbert Spencer pause at this point and forbear to name this all-producing consciousness. They say our most reverent attitude towards it is that of the non-knower or the agnostic, and none of us could get further if we did not believe in revelation; as it is, we thank these philosophic thinkers for the light they have given, and take the torch from their hands and go on. The nature of this Eternal Substance, this all-vital generative energy, has been revealed to us as Spirit. "There is one body," the visible universe, "and one spirit," the vivifying life thereof. Spirit is the eternal substance, the universal reason, the one life, the one intelligence, expressing itself in a vast diversity of ways and degrees, in a vast diversity of things; and from this profound conception

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of the absolute unity of the all-vital generative energy thus expressing itself in a diversity of ways has arisen an enlarged definition of a symbol. The force of a symbol is no longer its characteristic likeness to that which it symbolises; it is often, on the contrary, very unlike it; but its essential oneness, identity, with that which it symbolises. This truth, luminous with high suggestion, is partly illustrated by the utterance of the Baptist about water and fire; for water and fire, though apparently antagonistic entities, are practically identical, being composed of the same essential elements. The Baptist uses one, fire, as the thing symbolised, and the other, water, as the symbol; but one is only a different and more volatile combination of the same elements which constitute the other; both are composed of oxygen and hydrogen, and each, under requisite conditions and with varying combinations, is convertible into the other, and in this instance, in literal accuracy, the symbol and the thing symbolised are, in essence, the same.

This thought of the essential identity of the symbol and the thing symbolised, however apparently unlike, helps to prepare the mind for the revelation of the Incarnation; for the revelation of the Incarnation is that the child of

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Mary, lying in dependent helplessness in the manger at Bethlehem, is the highest expression, the divinest sacrament, the most inspired symbol of the loving heart of the Infinite and Eternal Intelligence, and it is not possible to conceive a greater apparent contrast between the symbol and the thing symbolised. When once the identity of the Universal Intelligence, with each and all of its expressions, symbols, outward and visible signs, is acknowledged, the successive diversities and degrees of these symbols become relatively insignificant. When once you believe, as Mr. Herbert Spencer virtually taught, though not in these words, that there is but one substance, *ousia*, in the universe, and when once you believe, as Jacob Böehme taught, that this substance is the Spirit of the Infinite Intensity called God, when once you believe that this one life and this one intelligence are immanent in the mineral and the crystal, in the lower order of animal life, in a greater degree in the soul of man, and in the angels and archangels of the higher spheres of light and life, the keen and earnest thinker is not confronted with any *a priori* difficulty when he is asked to believe the transcendent revelation that the highest, most consummate expression, the most perfect symbol of the intelligence and

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life and love of the all-filling Absolute, was embodied for a unique purpose in the Babe of Bethlehem; and inasmuch as it is an axiom that the symbol and that which is symbolised are identical in essence though not in manifestation, he will be able without violating his logical faculty to unite with the whole voice of Christendom in the hymn of adoration—

“Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord,
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
Art most high in the Glory of God the Father.”

One mental difficulty confronts us here which is inseparable from the first recognition of God as the one light and life of the universe, the one *ousia* or substance. You say if Jesus is thus the highest, most perfect, most adorable sacrament or symbol of the Absolute, and wholly divine, because the sacrament or symbol and that which is symbolised are essentially one, then the whole universe is divine, and all that is, is a symbol or a sacrament of God. Well, so in a sense, a very beautiful sense, it is.

“The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, and the plains:

Are not these, O soul, the vision of Him Who reigns?

Is not the vision He? though He be not that which He seems.”

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The universe is one organism vivified by the life of God, and Divine Spirit is the central spirit of the whole body of mankind. Longfellow says—

“All things are symbols, the external shows
Of Nature have image in the mind,”

And this because man, and all things that exist independent of the will of man, are modes or manifestations of spirit; but the Christ revelation, the self-expression of the Absolute in the Babe of Bethlehem in its fundamental aspect, is transcendently higher than all other symbols, inasmuch as it is the personification or embodiment of the character, and relationship to mankind, of the creative source of life.

The recognition of the fact that the universe is a Sacrament of the Absolute has profoundly impressed all eastern nations, and made atheism amongst them impossible. No one ever heard of an atheist amongst the natives of India, unless made so by the undermining of their own hereditary faiths. But the universe is an imperfect sacrament, for it is but the sacrament of the Intelligence of the Almighty and has no necessary reference to the moral nature of the Creator; and many have worshipped the outward and visible sign of this sacrament, have

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confused the Creator with His works, have adored Nature as God, have worshipped sun, moon, and stars, and the crowning necessity of man in the course of the evolution of the religious idea, was a symbol, a sign, a sacrament, which, while retaining the conception of God as the Soul of the universe, should yet represent Him under a recognisable limitation, with moral attributes, within reach of human thought, and in full sympathy with human needs. This universal necessity was, in the fulness of time, supplied by the revelation of the Sacrament of the Incarnation. "This shall be a sign unto you," a symbol, a sacrament, "ye shall find a Babe." The Eternal Power and Godhead, which had been recognised, as the Apostle says, by the things that are made, which had stirred in the inmost sanctuary of every soul, which had suggested itself as the universal life, clothing itself in matter, manifested His personality, His moral life, His character, His feeling towards the race, His characteristics that resemble our own, in one human form, one supernaturally perfect and divine man, whose certificate of identity with the universal life of which He was the sacrament was His unrivalled perfection, and manifest control over the secrets of the universe, and unsurpassed power of

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attracting the hearts of men. Jesus, who was born at Bethlehem, was then the outward and visible sign of the personality and moral character of God, the Universal Soul. In sympathising consideration for the yearning of men for a closer knowledge of His character, all-pervading Fatherhood has come out of the universal into the conditioned, that men may know of what sort He is when He tells us that He is Emmanuel, God for us, God with us, and God in us. If we believe it, even in the slightest degree, and it is only to be spiritually perceived, it is intelligible that during the octave of Christmas men should humbly kneel when, in the Nicene Creed, they pronounce the mystic words that sweep away the clouds from before the face of God—AND WAS MADE MAN. He shows us in an acted picture what the heart of Eternal Fatherhood is towards us. "My Father," says the man Christ Jesus, "is greater than I;" and yet one and the same, for "I and the Father are one." As the thing symbolised is greater than the symbol, as the inward and spiritual part of a sacrament is greater than the outward and visible and yet they are the same; as light is greater than the rainbow and yet they are the same; as electricity is greater than a flash of lightning and yet they are the same. The Babe

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born twenty centuries ago, the Divine man of Nazareth, is the symbol, the sacrament; the essence behind the symbol, the reality behind the sacrament, is the character of the Universal Father, in Whom "we live and move and have our being." The visible symbol was removed. He returned to the Father; that is, He withdrew from limitations and returned to universal life. "I came forth from the Father and came into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father." That is the outward and visible sign of the sacrament blended with the thing signified; the reality incorporated the symbol. But now we can speak to the Eternal with the "Jesus thought" of Him in our mind. We can call Him Jesus if we like. The chasm between earth and heaven is bridged, because we know that God is Jesus. There are not two Eternals, but one Eternal, and the manger of Bethlehem is the cradle for all anxieties and fears, because in it is absolute rest in the character of God. No longer should we face the unknown future, weak, irresolute, doubting, for "unto us a Child is born," and that Child is the perfect symbol of our God. "We have waited for Him;" "He will come and save us." The Sacrament of the Incarnation, the symbol of the Babe of Bethlehem, is Emmanuel, "God for us, God with us,

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God in us." And God, not a destiny, not a force, not the soul of the universe, not the power behind phenomena, not the Infinite and Eternal energy of Mr. Herbert Spencer, but such an one as Jesus.

Let me briefly indicate how this same thought of the identity of water and fire explains and illuminates the doctrine of the Christian sacraments. The symbols of cleansing, and of eating and drinking, cease to be open to the charge of traditional mummery or superstitious usage, when we realise that water and bread and wine are portions of that visible nature which only is because it is a clothing of Divine spirit, and which have been specially indicated by God Incarnate to be points of contact with Himself. The water in baptism is a sacrament or symbol of the Spirit, and a beautiful and accurate symbol, for water is not an element, but the result of the union of two elements, neither of which it is, without both of which it could not be, and with both of which it is indivisibly one. So the Holy Spirit is not a separate deity, but the out-flowing life of God in universal being, and God Incarnate, neither of which it is, but without both of which it would not be, and with both of which it is indivisibly one. This

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proposition is worthy of consideration when intellectually puzzled with crude irrational statements as to the doctrine of the Trinity; and water, like the rest of Nature, is spirit clothed, so that it is, in a sense, what it symbolises. The word and act of baptism imply that the person baptized belongs to the Lord independently of the ordinance. No man washes what is intrinsically vile; the washing implies that it is worth washing. And the sacrament of Holy Baptism is the earnest and promise of the continual cleansing and renewing through life of the Divine Spirit, Who claims through the conscience every heart for God. It may be said that the Holy Spirit is specially bound by covenant to strive, cleansingly, till death with the heart of the baptized. This thought applies with even more force to the Holy Communion, and it is noticeable how effectually it negatives the definition called Transubstantiation. Transubstantiation teaches that the *substantia*, that which is behind the symbol, is changed by consecration; but the whole force of the argument we have been considering is that the *substantia*, and that which symbolises the *substantia*, are essentially the same, and that God immanent is the *substantia* of all that is. So to change the *substantia* would

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be to change it into something other than God. Obviously, if a man disbelieves in Jesus as the Father's Word, or character, embodied in a symbol, the Holy Communion is nothing to him. What could it be? If you believe it you will recognise the truth that the symbol and the thing symbolised are the same, and that if He had taken an ear of corn, or one of the olives of Gethsemane, and said, "This is My body," He would not have conferred upon it any properties it had not before, for all Nature is the body of the Word of God; but if He set it apart to be solemnly eaten with due ceremonial, it would have been a sacrament of Himself, and would have communicated His life to us. He did not take an ear of corn, but He did take the common elements of the ordinary meal of Galilee, accessible to all, and of these He solemnly declared the truth that they were the body of the Word of the Father, and He indicated that they were to be set apart in a particular manner and received with a particular attitude of mind, and that in such reception He would feed with His own life the faithful receiver. If there lived a human being so open to the Divine presence in all things that he honestly realised that every atom of Nature was a

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garment of the Word, that every meal was a feeding on His body, that every breath was inhaling His spirit, and every thought a conscious communion with God, you would have there a man who could be independent of sacraments. There are no such human beings; there never have been. Jesus Himself conformed to every ordinance of the Jewish Church, was circumcised, received into the Church at twelve years of age, baptized, sought the mind of the Father in Scripture, strengthened Himself with prayer. Why then should any excommunicate themselves? Why not with effort and purpose and repentance and confession and soul-hunger prepare to come to Him in His own appointed ordinance, and claim, each one for himself, in humble confidence, His promise, "HE THAT EATETH ME, THE SAME SHALL LIVE BY ME"?

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“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful.”—
LUKE vi. 36.

I HAVE been asked to speak of that quality of Divine sonship which “droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven,” namely, Mercy. There is a peculiar philosophical and historical interest associated with it. There is no room for doubt as to the precise meaning of our Lord’s exhortation, and it falls in with the line of thought I have pursued in these sermons, for it is a direct appeal to the divine instinct in man; it is a stimulus applied to the “immortal centre in us all,” to the true ego, the Divine sonship, the source of Godlike action and emotion. It is a protest against the method of appeal to a brother man as though he were a child of the devil whom God desired to possess; it appeals to him as a child of God living below his privileges; it bids him note the divine thoughts and purposes pulsing within himself, and suffer them to bear

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fruit in character. No other appeal is justifiable or really effective. God in man is man's eternal possibility, and sonship is not something superadded from without but evolved from within. Therefore He says, "Be merciful," because the germ and potentiality of mercy is within you, inherited from the Creative Power whence you came forth, the characteristic element of Whose nature is mercy.

I am not about to attempt to define the quality of mercy: Shakespeare has done it for us in the *Merchant of Venice* with his customary shrewdness of analysis. I desire to point out, first, the conclusive inferential evidence of the character of the Universal Soul afforded by this injunction. The whole scheme of the harsh and artificial theology of the Latin school is exploded by this injunction to man to be as merciful, no more and no less, than his God. A stream cannot rise higher than its source; nothing can be commanded as desirable in me that does not exist elementally and transcendently in Him Whose child, by thought generation, I am. If Descartes is right in teaching that there always must be at least as much in the first cause as in the sum total of all its effects, then I am justified in pleading from the depths of my infirm, temptable,

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suffering mortal nature, "Thou Who hast commanded me to be as merciful as Thou art, to love my enemies, to bless them that curse me, Who hast said that if I only love them that love me I am but a sinner, shalt not Thou love Thine enemies, bless them that curse Thee?" And the whole prolific brood of cruel caricatures of God are put to flight by the inexorable logic of this simple injunction, "Be merciful, as your Father is merciful." Moreover, that He may set at rest any doubts in my mind as to whether His ideal of mercy is different from mine, He, the unthinkable Primal cause, as He has conditioned His infinite understanding in natural phenomena, has conditioned His moral attributes under the limitations of a specific human life in the Incarnation for my observation and adoration: so that when I look on Jesus I am looking on the Sacrament of the Absolute, and I know that the mercy of Jesus is the mercy of God. There is infinite rest in the thought; it promotes filialism, it stimulates love, it suggests trust in Fatherhood rather than a belief in an omnipotent totality of forces; it is the inspiration of those sweet words in Psalm lxxvii:

"Will the Lord cast off for ever?
Will He be favourable no more?

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Is His mercy clean gone for ever?
Doth His promise fail for evermore?
Hath God forgotten to be gracious?
Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?"

And then, as if ashamed of the very thought, the writer of the Psalm continues:

"And I said, This is mine own infirmity;
But I will remember the years of the right hand
of the Most High."

So much for the first logical inference from the command to be "merciful, as God is merciful." But I said there was a peculiar philosophical and historical interest associated with it. There is not one virtue or quality which is more directly and exclusively the fruit of the evolution of God's life in man than mercy, and therefore the absence of which from the life is more significant. Shakespeare was right, as usual, when he said, "It is an attribute of God Himself." It may be accepted as an axiom that mercy is not one of the natural instincts; that is, supposing the evolution theory to be true as regards our animal nature, it is not one of the instincts which we share with other living creatures to which we are by nature akin. Mercy does not exist in the animals other than man in their wild or natural state; the emotion awakened in them by the sight of pain and distress in another animal is more

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anger than pity, they almost invariably turn and rend the sufferer. Frances Power Cobbe, in her able essay on the social instinct, calls the emotion heteropathy, as opposed to sympathy. In the savage races, even where there is a sense of right and wrong, heteropathy prevails over sympathy. Lord Avebury, in his history of civilisation, describes a funeral many years ago in Fiji which an Englishman was invited to attend. The Englishman saw no corpse, and expressed surprise. The Fijian pointed out his mother, who was in the procession, and said she had now lived long enough, and her sons were about to put her to death, and bury her, and presently she was strangled and buried. That was human heteropathy. Now the first awakening of a sense, however dim, of Divine Immanence, of universal life, of the visible universe being in some sense the expression of an illimitable love, changes heteropathy into sympathy, suggests a reverence for life, and a corresponding abhorrence of cruelty. And this sense, though it knows not itself by that name, is really the stirring of the Divine life, the sonship immanent in man. The earliest traces of the attribute of mercy are therefore, as we should have expected, found amongst the Aryan races in

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the Far East, who, in the dim and distant past, were the first of the human race to recognise indistinctly a Father-Soul pulsing through all things, whom they termed Dyaush Pitar, or the heaven Father. Permit me an illustration from an ancient source. I was speaking recently of the Hindoo triad, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, in which triad Siva, the deity of destruction, was incorporated with, subordinate to, and yet in apparent antagonism to Brahma and Vishnu. Now, in connection with this triad, there exists a very ancient legend which illustrates my contention that the most primitive Eastern thinkers exalted the conception of mercy. One of the ten Maharishis or primeval patriarchs was asked which god of the triad was the greatest. In order to ascertain, he went first to Brahma, entered his presence rudely, and without prostration. The god rebuked him severely, but was pacified by reasonable apologies. He then went to Siva, in Kaitasa, and omitted, as before, all token of reverence. The vindictive deity was enraged, and would have destroyed him, but was, in the end, conciliated. Lastly, he repaired to Vaikantha, the heaven of Vishnu, whom he found asleep. To put the forbearance of the god to the severest test, he boldly kicked him

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on the breast. The god arose, and seeing the Maharishi, inquired anxiously whether his foot was hurt, and proceeded to rub it tenderly. This, said the Maharishi, is the mightiest god; he overpowers by the most potent of weapons—by kindness, generosity, and mercy. Is it not a foregleam, nearly two thousand years before Christ, of the Divine injunction, "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; be ye merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful"?

Mercy is, therefore, an affirmation of Divine sonship, and the nearer the thoughts of men approached to a conception of the organic unity of the race, the more definite became the idea of mercy. More than five hundred years before Christ, came the great reformation of Brahmanism, under the teaching of Gautama Buddha. The religion based on the Vedas was becoming formal, perfunctory, sacerdotal, exclusive, and Gautama Buddha was raised up to effect a profound reaction to spirituality. His wonderful life, his startling similarity to the Christ who was to come, are matters of history, and can be read of all men in the ancient sculptures preserved in the museum at Lahore. His dying prophecy, as cited by Dr. Oldenburg, suffices to lift him in human estimation above all the pre-

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Christian sages. "Five hundred years," he said, "will this doctrine of the truth abide, and then shall come forth the Buddha Maitreya, the Buddha of brotherly love." Four hundred and seventy years afterwards Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem, and precisely five hundred years afterwards He ascended the mount, and preached these very words: "Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." But the point is this, mercy was the ceaseless theme of Buddha's teaching. Mercy was the peculiar characteristic of his prominent disciples, the most remarkable of whom was the mighty Buddhist King Asoka, who reigned in Gujerat three hundred and fifty years before Christ, who antedated all our great reforms, who abolished slavery, built hospitals, guarded the interests of the animals, and covered India with rock inscriptions, to be seen to this day, inculcating the highest morality and the obligation of mercy to all that live. And his dying words put to the blush a vast proportion of the theology of to-day. "Oh, Asoka, now thou wilt enter eternal bliss," said one. "Never," he replied, "of my own free will, will I enter Paradise while one poor soul wanders outside." What is the moral of this? It is here. The Buddha Maitreya has come, He "who for us men and

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for our salvation came down from heaven." The heart of the Universal Soul has become incarnate specifically in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God. He has declared, with an authority as transcendentally above that of Buddha as the heaven is above the earth, that universal humanity is the outbirth of God, that the sonship manifested in Him is not His exclusive prerogative, but the attribute and possession of the race as a whole; and He was the enthusiast for humanity, the passionate lover of the people, the friend of the poor, the brother to the sinner, the comforter to the weary and the heavy laden. "Go," He said, "and learn what this meaneth. I will have mercy and not sacrifice." "Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." So, to be unmerciful is not merely to be a social nuisance and a domestic tyrant, it is to commit a concrete crime against the Christ nature; it is to dwarf, distort, suppress the real manhood; whereas to be true to the Divine nature is to lessen the sorrow of the world, to be a smile of God in this education of tears, to be "merciful as our Father is merciful." Whenever the principle of Christianity, which is the Christ in you, is unfettered; where it can spread its wings, it blesses all that lives. "If a man is a

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Christian," said John Wesley, "his dog and his cat are the better for it." Where it is shrivelled into limitations its mercy is cramped, as when the request was first made to form a branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Rome, the Pope refused, on the contemptible plea "that such an association could not be sanctioned by the Holy See, being based on the theological error that a Christian owed any duty to animals."

Now, let it be admitted that the appropriate and characteristic action of Divine sonship is mercy, and that we desire to ascertain whether our own moral nature is producing this quality, the sphere of our self-examination would be threefold: (1) At home: what is my guiding principle in dealing with those around me? Am I dictatorial in argument, severe in judgment, harsh in condemnation, sarcastic in repartee? There is no more unmerciful whip on earth than sarcasm, especially in the family circle. A sensitive nature would prefer a blow to a sneer. Again, with my servants, am I exacting in my demands, severe in my rebukes, unfriendly in my manner? Do you think all this trivial? But to know that the Christ lives in you is to live fraternally, humanely, mercifully. (2) What is my attitude towards almsgiving? Am I

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hiding under the plausible maxim that I must be just before I am generous? No; be merciful before you are just. He didn't say blessed are the prudent, the economical, the cautious. If, in a city like London, you are honestly afraid of imposition, I counsel you to deposit a few pounds at the nearest office of the Charity Organisation Society; arrange that you will send all unknown applicants to the office on the understanding that they shall be relieved if it is possible to do so without doing harm. When your deposit is exhausted, send more.

(3) What is my attitude towards the sufferings of animals other than man? and have I fairly faced the indescribable horrors of vivisection, and taken sides in the controversy? am I still deluded by the dust thrown into the eyes of the public? Then remember that if all that is claimed for this detestable practice be true, He did not say blessed are the physiologically acute, the skilled operators; blessed are they who can be saved a pain because a hundred dogs have been tortured to death, but "Blessed are the merciful."

Finally, if still desirous of a clearer and more authoritative definition of mercy, read, as if addressed to yourself, the Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan; and if you read it aright,

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London will gain some fresh workers, and the temperance crusade some new recruits. The test of inheriting eternal life, in other words, of the true evolution of the Divine nature, is there authoritatively described by our Lord as showing mercy. It is no question of orthodoxy, of correct conceptions of illimitable mysteries of unquestioning acceptance of authoritative crystallisations. The Samaritan was, theologically, an abomination to the Jew. It is a question of remedial activity. "Be not deceived," said St. John, "he that doeth good is of God." It was evidently not possible for the Samaritan in the parable to hunt down the banditti, and make them disgorge their spoil, but it was possible for him to bind up wounds, to become identified with the sufferer by putting him on his own beast, to place him where he would be taken care of. To do as much as this is demanded of every inheritor of eternal life, that is, every one who claims sonship with God. And if, in the face of the hideous prevalence of a corroding public vice that degrades the peer as surely as it brutalises the working man, a sin that fills the prisons, crowds the hospitals, peoples the asylums, we, God's sons, can look on coldly and indifferently while others struggle; if we consider the drunkard a fit

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subject for a smile, a sneer, or a jest; if we oppose or discourage every legislative endeavour to diminish temptation; we may be more scrupulous than the Pharisees, more orthodox than the Pope, more religious than Noah, Daniel, and Job, more church-going than the priest and Levite in the parable, but we are condemned by the command of the Divine Master, Who said, "Go and do thou likewise," and Who said also, "Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful."

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“ Now, while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord (Jehovah) saith unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit Thou on My right hand, till I put Thine enemies underneath Thy feet? If David then calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son? And no one was able to answer Him a word.”—MATT. xxii. 41 (R.V.).

THE ancient religions constantly dealt in riddles, problems, and conundrums. The Phenician legend of the Sphinx is an illustration; the mysterious, partly human, partly animal, partly Divine creature put a riddle to the race. Whoso failed to guess it, perished. If solved, the Sphinx herself perished. In that case it was a riddle as to the nature of man. The Egyptian goddess of mythology, Isis, put a riddle to the thinkers. “I am that which has been, and shall be; my veil hath no man lifted.” The solution was the fact that Isis represented the ceaseless activity of the reproductive energy

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of forces apparently self-existent, suggesting the combination of the male and female element in the nature of the first cause. The presentation of a problem is a challenge to thought; and

“Thought, ’tis thine on eagle’s wings to soar,
Unknown unfathomed realms explore.”

Every discovery in physical science is the result of thought challenged by a problem. Discovery does not create, it unveils. Gas, steam, electricity, magnetism, telegraphy, these are not new creations; they are unveilings of hitherto undiscovered facts as old as the world itself. They were problems that challenged minds, saying:

“With thy thought go and do thy duty,
And thy work shall clear thine eyes.”

And the immense advance in modern knowledge of natural law is the result of eyes cleared by hard thinking. Similarly, Christianity, which the ancient Greek Fathers declared was not a new religion, but the flower on the plant of all previous religions, challenges thought with its problem, its conundrum. The conundrum of Christianity, “What think ye of the Christ?” meets us on every plane. Some years ago it was propounded from behind the footlights of a theatre. I was one of the large audience,

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present by special invitation, who witnessed the performance of a striking original religious play, by the Swedish author Björnsen, called *Beyond Human Power*. The play was based on the old problem, "What think ye of Christ?" What is Christianity?

The first scene of the play was memorable, and the acting of the principal part by Mrs. Patrick Campbell perfect. Briefly, a devout Protestant minister, with a remote pastorate high up in the mountains, is so full of the Holy Spirit, in such ceaseless communion with God, that his prayers produced results looked upon by the simple villagers as miracles. He is, however, unable to heal his own wife, to whom he is devotedly attached, who is hopelessly paralysed. It seems to be revealed to him that if his children will pray with him at her bedside she will be raised up. At the appointed moment the children confess that they have lost their faith, and cannot pray. Then follow explanations as to how they have lost their faith, and discussion as to what Christianity is? and the question remains practically unanswered. The second act is partly marred by a futile discussion between a number of ministers upon the possibility of miracles, and the proper attitude of the Church towards

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so-called miraculous events, in which the arguments on both sides are a hundred years behind the modern standard of thought, and, therefore, wearisome and uninstructional. Meanwhile, the miracle-working minister is in the Church praying by himself, with prolonged intensity, for his wife's restoration. The final scene is full of power. The minister returns with the triumphant assurance that his prayer is answered, and that he will find his wife healed. Amidst indescribable excitement she rises and walks towards him, apparently completely restored, throws herself into his arms, and slowly sinks to the ground and dies. In bitter anguish the minister lifts his hands to heaven, and with the cry, "Oh, I didn't mean this! I didn't mean this!" his heart breaks, and he falls dead by her side.

The problem propounded in this religious play was the deepest that can occupy the mind of man. It is threefold: What is Christianity? What is miracle? What is answer to prayer? And, as the greater contains the less, the answer to the first question includes the answer to the others. The answer lies hid, is indeed actually suggested, by our Lord's question to the Pharisees, "What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He? If the son of David,

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why did David call Him Lord?" Upon the purely superficial plane, the questions admitted of course, of an easy answer. The patriarch Joseph, for example, became the lord of his own father. That they did not answer in that strain is proof positive that they recognised that He alluded to something deeper, but were unwilling to think it out to its logical issue. What matter if, as the authors of *Lux Mundi* told us, David never wrote the hundred and tenth psalm which our Lord quoted—it was the current belief at the time that he did; and so our Lord takes it as the occasion on which to fasten His appeal to the thought-faculty of His hearers, as He took the brooding hen, or the Galilean lily, or the vine trailing on the wall. The Hebrew words, "Jehovah" and "Adonai," translated "Lord" and "my Lord," might have given them the clue. "Jehovah," as understood by the more spiritually minded Prophets, was Universal Spirit; "Adonai," Universal Spirit embodied under limitations. It is as though the all-filling Universal Spirit spoke to that part of Himself which He had embodied under limitations in creation, in words of promise and encouragement, declaring that ultimately all resistance should be overcome, all confusion submit to the law of final order, all enemies

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become the footstool of His feet. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, till I put all enemies under Thy feet." Do you see what a perfectly magnificent promise it is of the ultimate perfection and spiritual development of the whole human race? Do you see how it contains a revelation of a beautiful law inwoven into our spiritual constitution? Do you see how it suggests the secret of the glorious birthright of us poor world-darkened human beings? What think ye of the Christ? This is the answer: The Christ is Adonai, the self-utterance of the Eternal Reason of God, the Divine Intelligence going forth in creation, and dwelling in that which He creates; and every blade of grass, and every tiny flower, is full of a strange invisible working, which is God's thought transmuted into matter, Jehovah thinking Himself as Adonai. And God's thought reaches its climax in the human race; and Adonai, the Eternal Word called the Christ, Universal Spirit embodied in limitations, is immanent in all men, as the deepest ground of their personal self-conscious life, the source of their moral susceptibility. Every human heart is a womb from which sooner or later He shall be born; every human body a temple in which He shall dwell as the central vitality, the

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inmost germ of the human organism. The Christ, the Word of the Father, must eventually impart quickening power to the bud of spiritual life enclosed in each God-breathed human spirit. In spite of the awful predominance of brute instinct, in spite of the degradations that corrupt the foundations of human society, the race, in its reality, is not retrograding to destruction; not even one isolated member of it can become eternally and fatally doomed to evil, for, to the leverage power, the lifting force, which has the potentiality to raise the children of men grovelling in the mire of appetite and passion, to the germ of sonship, the ray of the Divine life enshrined in the clay of humanity, the promise has gone forth, "I will make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet." Jehovah has said to Adonai, Universal Spirit has said to conditioned Spirit, "Sit thou at My right hand."

What then is Christianity? Christianity is the first authoritative revelation that man is truly the All-Father's child, immortal in his essence, and destined, by however painful a process, to be brought at last to his home. He is made "for a little while lower than God," that God may put all things under his feet. "We see not yet all things put under Him,"

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says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but, he continues, "we see Jesus." Yes, we see Jesus; and here comes in the rest of the solution to the riddle put to the Pharisees. The man Christ Jesus is the peculiar unique manifestation, in a single selected and prepared human life, of that spirit of sonship which is an attribute and glory of humanity as a whole. He was David's Son in the sense that the human garment in which He was embodied was born of the house and lineage of David. He was David's Lord, and all men's Lord, inasmuch as He was the Word Incarnate, the Eternal Reason of God manifest in flesh; Sonship, or self-utterance, in absolute perfection. He is therefore the type, the promise, the specimen of that perfect sonship, which must eventually be fulfilled in all. As the first green blade that can be seen in the fields is the earnest of the coming harvest, so the perfected humanity of Jesus is the promise and earnest of the great world harvest, when all shall be gathered unto Him, when school-time with its sorrows is over and past, and God shall be all in all.

Surely this sublime truth illustrates our Lord's saying, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing," and St. Paul's triumphant commentary, "I can

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do all things through Christ, Who strengtheneth me." Apart from the Christ within, the Divine germ, we can of course do nothing; without the life-germ a seed can do nothing. In the sacrament of Holy Baptism, this immortal life-germ was solemnly acknowledged, and the promise made that by conscious effort, by earnest cultivation, we would reach it forth in eager faith to the Person of the Divine Jesus, the Christ objectively manifested as God's Eternal Reason embodied in an individuality; and through Him St. Paul says he can do all things, for when He is thus definitely appealed to, the Person Jesus influences the heart of man as the moon acts upon the tides of the ocean, stimulating man's higher intuitive faculties, strengthening his good desires, saving him from falling into sin; and, through the strengthening office of Jesus, everywhere, always accessible, the sacrament of the Holy Communion is His specially revealed touch-point and meeting-place, where the souls of men can come to Him when they are weary and worn and sad.

Once more, this deeper view of the Christ, which comes from the riddle put to the Pharisees, namely, that He is subjectively the Divine Spirit immanent in man, slowly and surely working in him for good; and objectively the

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type, the promise, the specimen, and the helper of the race, should cure us of murmuring when tried by sorrow, bereavement, weariness, and pain. The unique specimen of the race was made perfect through suffering. He was a Man of Sorrows. There is apparently no other road. To punish the poor human race as it is punished, without some splendid, some transcendent purpose, would be a tyranny which could not for one moment be attributed to the holy, loving, responsible Father of men. An immense proportion of the anguish in the world can in no sense be accounted for as chastening for sin; and, on the other hand, to think that it was permitted or inflicted recklessly, would be to hate and despise, while you fear, the Eternal Power. To believe that it is a mysterious part of a magnificent educative purpose, the consummation of which shall be so glorious as abundantly to justify the means, and earn the approval of every perfected soul, is the outcome of the Christian faith. The physical evils of pain, disease, and death are, for some hidden reason, absolutely essential to our highest development and greatest good. We can see a little of its meaning even here. The noblest endowments of man—pity, mercy, self-sacrifice, patience, liberality, unselfishness—would be unborn but for

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what, in our blindness, we call evil. The problem only demands patience.

“Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is Godlike.

Patience accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is made Godlike,

Purified, strengthened, made perfect, and rendered more worthy of heaven.”

And this practically answers the final problem in Bjørnsen's play. The mental torture of the Swedish pastor, when the answer to his intense, prevailing, believing prayer was the death, not the recovery, of his beloved, is an echo of the bitter cry of many a weary human heart, “Oh, I didn't mean that. God has misunderstood me. I wanted Him to save me from the anguish of witnessing my wife's cripple state.”

No, “he didn't mean that.” He meant that his adored wife, the joy of his life, should be restored to him in fulness of health, strength, and beauty. That is what poor humanity always means when it talks about God answering prayer. If such prayers always prevailed in their surface interpretation, what Gautama Buddha called the “wheel of begetting” would cease to turn; the infant school of earth life would be overcrowded with grown-up pupils, who ought to have gone on to the high school. The true answer came.

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The perfect knowledge and boundless love of the Divine mind, Who, as Solomon says, is "mightily, smoothly, and sweetly ordering all things," answered the prayer in a more perfect way, in giving those two loving souls the priceless gift of simultaneous, painless departure into the fuller, freer, nobler life in the other sphere of being.

When the problem is presented to us, "What is Christianity ?" let our answer be, Christianity is Christ. Though Christianity contains all philosophy, it is not a philosophy but a Person, a Person who is the explanation of God, the interpretation of man, the assurance of perfection and the compassionate, accessible, faithful friend of every needy heart committed to His guidance and protection, for all power is given unto Him, both in heaven and on earth.

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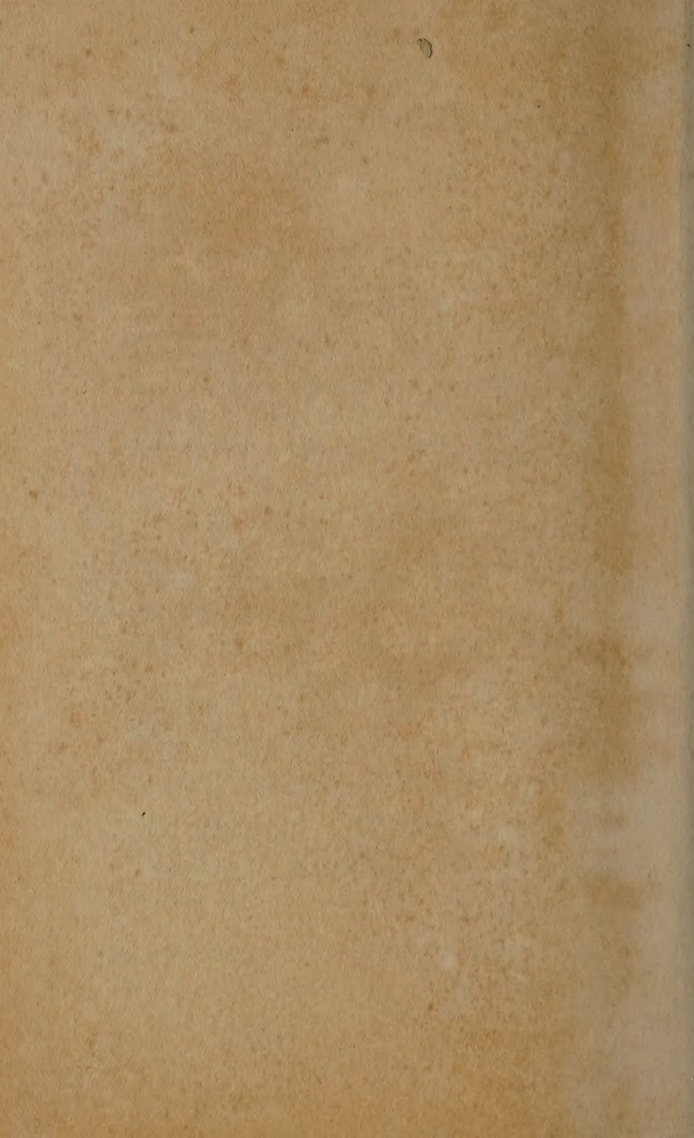
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